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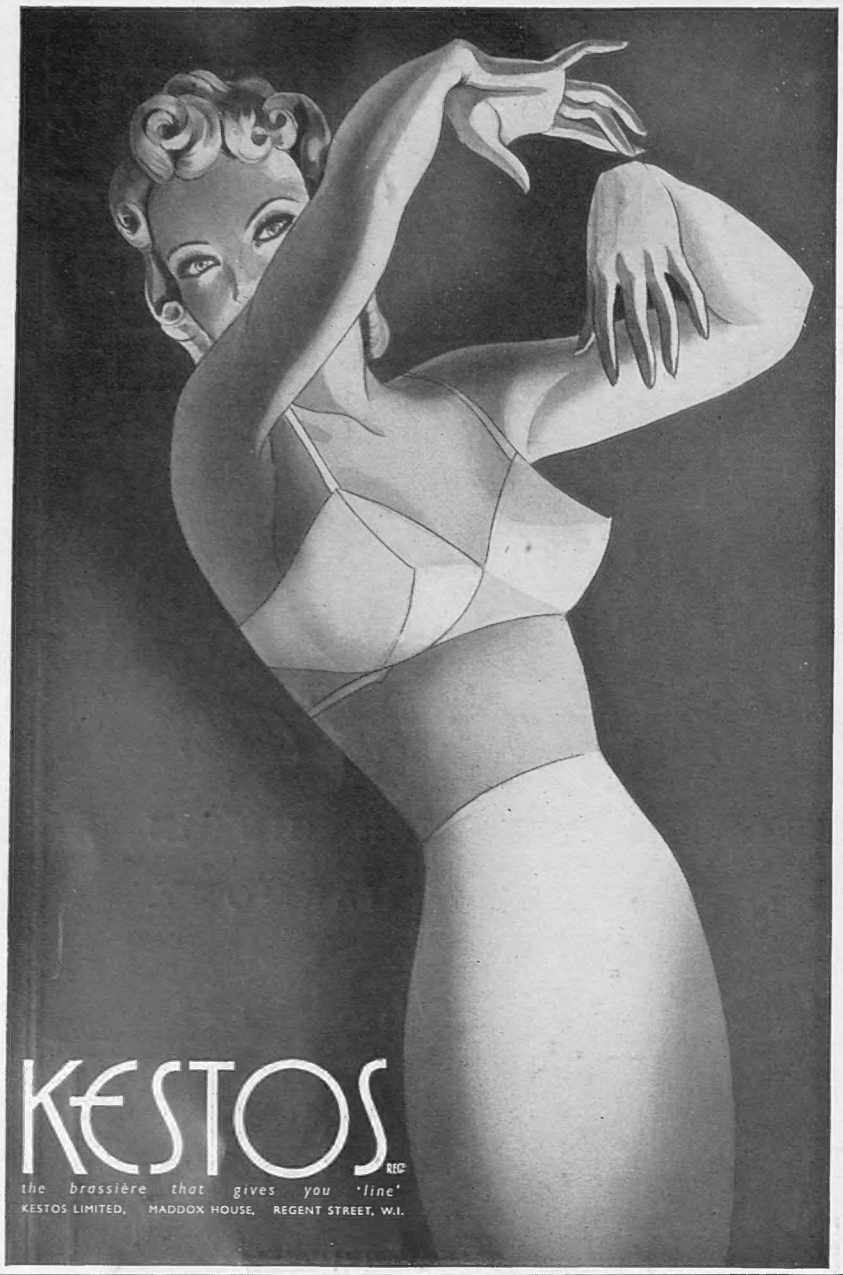

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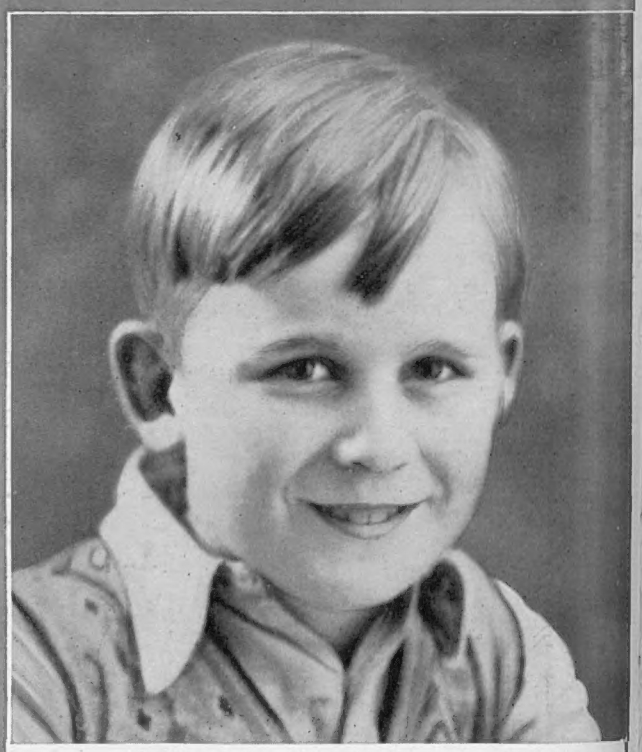


Little lives, once sad, may, with your help, be lifted up where brightness shall follow gloom, and laughter take the place of tears. Children needing care and protection because of the war are daily joining

OUR FAMILY OF 5,000

Gifts gratefully received by the Secretary

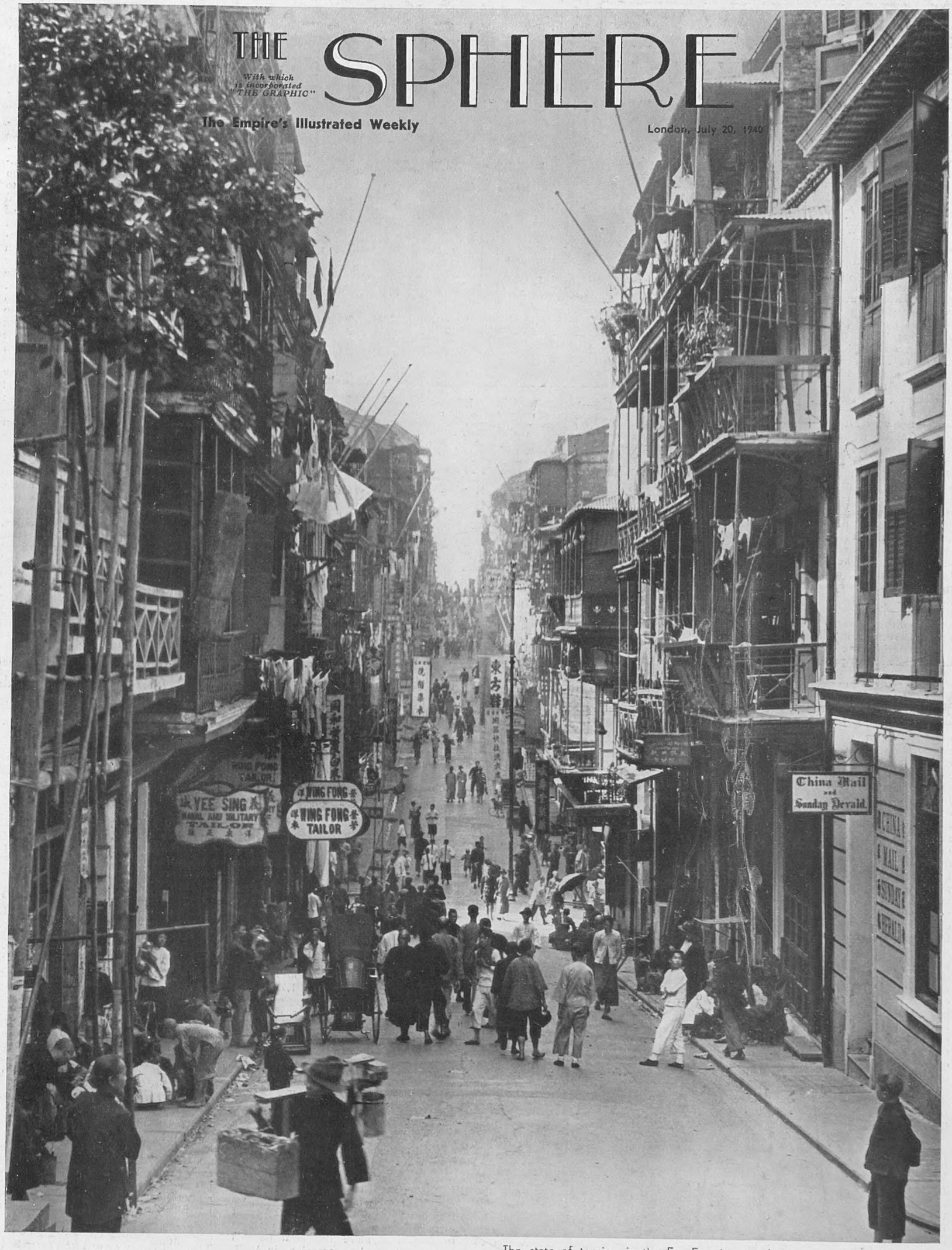
OLD TOWN HALL, KENNINGTON, S.E.11

THE SPHERE

With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"

The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

London, July 20, 1940



HONG KONG, ON THE EVE OF THE STORM

A Scene in the Heart of the Colony, Wellington Street in the Native Quarter

The state of tension in the Far East increased during the past week, when the Japanese Navy started blockading the remaining open Chinese ports of Ningpo, Fuchow, Santuao and Wenchow, following the intimation to Great Britain that military traffic on the Burma-Yunnan highway should cease. This followed an earlier demand to the French Government of a similar nature regarding traffic on the Tonking railway to Yunnan. Pourparlers at once took place in Tokyo in the endeavour to discover a possible basis of agreement with the Japanese Government, and an offer on the part of the British Government to mediate between Tokyo and Chungking with a view to arriving at a satisfactory peace seems to have been thrown out. General Chiang Kai-shek was reported to have at once replied that China was determined to continue the fight until the Japanese were expelled. Then followed the action already referred to, and the resignation of the Japanese Cabinet. The defences of Hong Kong were further strengthened and the evacuation of the British wives and children was expedited. Further pictures relating to Hong Kong's defences will be found on pages 68 and 69 of this issue

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A WAR NEWSLETTER — No. XLVI

32–34, ST. BRIDE STREET, E.C.4

THE BITTEREST HUMILIATION OF ALL—THE FRENCH ARMISTICE DELEGATION RECEIVE ITALY'S TERMS: On Monday, June 24, the Plenipotentiaries of the Bordeaux Government met the Italian Armistice representatives at the Villa Incisa on the outskirts of Rome. A deep veil of secrecy covered the proceedings and details—shameful in the extreme, considering that Italy had entered the war only a few days previously and had hardly met her adversary on the field of battle—were concealed from the great bulk of the French nation. The attitude of the French delegation is reflected in their faces, as Marshal Badoglio, Chief of the Italian General Staff, reads out the conditions of the Armistice. From left to right on the other side of the table are Vice-Admiral Leluc, M. Leon Noel, General Huntziger, Chief of the French Delegation, General Parisot, and General Bergeret

TO PRAYERS, TO FRAYERS!—Bishops (in their shovel hats) and M.P.s and other worthy people are bombarding the Powers-that-be to organise calls to prayer and intercession days on a "national basis." I look on it this way: All who believe in the existence of God and in His concern for the cause of justice, humanity, and decency are to-day, alike by their service and in their thoughts, making intercession to Him during every conscious hour. We believe that Britain now stands, and stands alone, for that great cause—the very articles of the Christian faith—and our prayer is simple and concise—*God save England*. My own conception of the "Immanent Will" does not envisage a Being who responds to a parrot call and neglects the prayer of a humble heart, here and there and everywhere spoken in the silent watches, in the privacy of thought in workshop and field and outpost, on the sea and in the air. A Government may reject an individual prayer and respond to a parrot cry—it often does; it does nothing else. But the "Immanent Will," I hope and believe, is something composed of finer material than a cabinet of politicians, howsoever pure and patriotic.

ANY FATHER TO HIS YOUNG CHILDREN.—On the eve of the great trial—the massed attack on Britain by the Nazis and Fascists—any father with young children in this country might address this apologia to them in his thoughts. Whether invasion come this week, or next, or never, their lives already are threatened night and day by the chances of indiscriminate bombing which must constantly intensify: My dears, as I watch you playing on the lawn which any moment may be a bomb crater; as I watch you reading in your little beds under a gimcrack roof of a rickety house; as I see you walking down the lane to our village with your gas masks slung over your shoulders, I feel that a general apology from grown-ups to the young is as abundantly called for as it is impossible to express. That general apology I cannot attempt. That which I offer is more personal, more private, more precisely a family affair. It may be that, by pulling strings and moving such heaven and earth as lay within my grasp, I might have found accommodation to carry you and to board you out overseas in distant lands, away from the present centre of the hell which men have created on earth. Rightly or wrongly, we decided against it. In our short lives together you and we have never been parted by estranging seas; we have never handed you over to the keeping of strangers. Even our holidays have been spent together. We are none of us very easy apart. In those few happy years there has not been a misunderstanding between us, nor, I think, an angry word. The banner over us has been Love, and it has waved triumphantly in a sweet and steady breeze. Nothing in our lives has counted beside the one overriding aim that your lives should be constantly busy and happy, secure and healthy. We believe they have been so, and we believe that unbroken family life has made them so. And when the bitter moment came to decide how best that aim could be pursued in the present perils which beset our home, you were still too young to throw your opinions into the scales. We weighed the risks on both sides for you, and decided to face together all the dangers which may threaten. You will remember with pride, long after we are dead, that you as children fought with us upon St. Crispin's day—that greatest of all our national "Crispins"—and you and your children will accept our apologia and approve our decision.

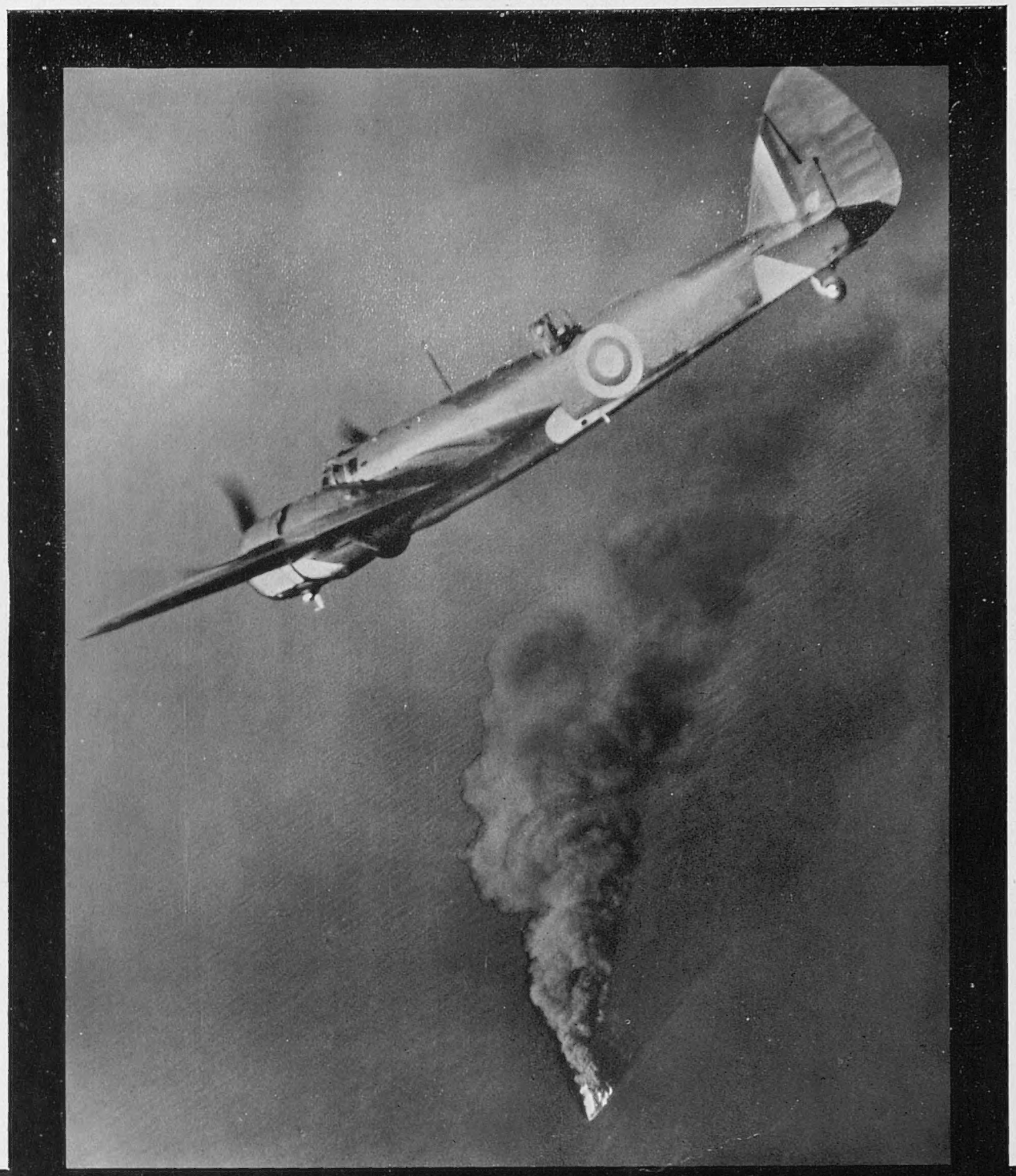
A DOCUMENT IN DEFENCE—This is what one young girl, a few years older than the eldest of my children, wrote to her parents on the same subject: "I'm glad you have given me the chance to decide what I want to do, because although the prospect of helping to build up a better place in the New World is tempting I am going to stay here. How could I fly away to safety leaving those I love in danger? I'd be a poor Briton if I did that. I prefer to stay in danger and see this through to the end. Yet I suppose, when I come to think of it, it is my duty to go so that I can help in years to come to build up a new England out of the ruins of the old. I am staying tight in England whatever happens, and should we go under I shan't grumble, because there will be others to carry on our tradition where the vandals cannot get at them. Many people here are leaving for Canada, and not one of them wants to go. They all want to stay here in danger because it means leaving their parents and England for a long, long time. Can you see from my letter, I wonder, what the young women of Britain feel? I hope so, because if the attitude of 230 representatives means anything we are full of hope and courage." I "put in" the document on the files of my defence.

NAVY AND AIR FORCE ROUTINE WORK.—The public (and the enemy) have lately been informed of so much as it is deemed good for them to know of the Navy's routine work as a result of the new geographical positions of the Nazi zones, with 2,000 miles of coastline and harbours of every description over against Britain and British possessions and bases. The Navy is called on by every means in its power to block or render dangerous to shipping a hundred ports from which enemy expeditions of all kinds can issue. We stand off and on, sow the approaches with mines (including magnetic), post submarines in the exit channels and prepare to attack enemy minesweepers and to replace swept mines. The work involves a constant labour and watchfulness from every available ship of every type in co-operation with the air fleets mainly responsible for mine sowing, and it is only one item in the Navy's and the Air Force's role of convoying, destroying enemy vessels, and continuing the blockade of an ever-increasing coastline. This doubled series of routine duties falls on a Naval and Air Strength severely reduced by the French capitulation. That it is done efficiently we know beyond question. How it is done we do not know or seek to know. We merely assume that every man in any sphere of Naval employment or of Air Force employment has taken on a double ration of human strength and power of endurance. Hitherto, we have constantly been compelled, in assessing the effects of the blockade and of our naval action against Germany, to write off those enemy losses by the inestimable accretion to the enemy of stocks of food, raw material, armaments and petrol, gained by conquest of more and more countries. It may be the Nazis are not yet at the end of such bonus gains, but at least the probability now exists that we may begin to set off such damage as we inflict as permanent and total loss to the enemy. This note on the Navy's silent service comes aptly, in conjunction with the known work of the Air arms, to correct undue pessimism and to justify our faith in the belief that Hitler has yet to crack his hardest nut and that the cracking may prove to be of Hitler's jaw.

SINGEING THE BEARD. . .—How accurately history repeats her small store of incidents, how cleverly and artfully she serves up again and again fresh dishes from her small store cupboard. The modern British fleets in the sea and in the air are serving the invader precisely as Drake and his privateers served the King of Spain, seeking him out in the ports of assembly and singeing his beard for him. It is a bigger coastline by nearly 1,700 miles from which the Armada may come; it may come in three or four divisions from the North of Scandinavia to the Bay of Biscay. But our modern Drakes are Argus-eyed and apparently tireless, and no doubt at all they have already added to the costs of the trip to Britain. We have lost the Nazis £2,500,000 in planes alone since the intensified campaign began. That the Nazi young men have strong nerves we have never doubted. Those who will be accommodated in gliders for the descent on Britain have the tribute of my admiration. I would rather be in one of Napoleon's (or Hitler's) flat-bottomed boats. Well, before this "Newsletter" is in print, we may have had a first taste of the great invasion and we shall be able perhaps to draw one more historical parallel and recall the last occasion, in 1797, when these islands were invaded and General Tate was dumped with his 200 Paris gaolbirds off Fishguard and met defeat philosophically on Goodwick Sands at the hands of Lord Cawdor. General Tate drank up some poor quality wine and wrung the necks of some Welsh poultry. His Nazi imitators will do us a great deal more harm than that and give us many anxious hours, but I doubt not some of the ringleaders will find their way under guard to London for examination in Whitehall, as Tate and his brother officers did.

L.D.V.—In a paragraph in a recent SPHERE issue, I made reference to some of the difficulties which faced the organisers in the early weeks of the L.D.V. movement, notably the difficulties placed in the way of securing to organisers, who could not afford to be out of pocket long, repayment of their essential expenditure in organisation and on material for shelters and so on. Since that article was written, much has been done to remove obstacles and to simplify recoupments, as indeed I prophesied it would. Here are some facts given me by the War Office which may be of interest to local L.D.V. organisers: (1) On June 24 a capitation grant of £1 a man (£1,000,000) was made to the L.D.V. through the T.A. Association for expenses of administration. (2) About the same time the petrol allowance of 3d. per mile was granted to L.D.V.s compelled to use private cars. (3) Material for shelters, road blocks, etc., can be drawn from the nearest Ordnance depot without charge to anybody. Wealthy and patriotic members of the L.D.V., to avoid delay, have purchased material at their own expense; *but there is not the slightest need for this.* (Italics mine.) The times are critical. All concerned from top to bottom in the movement are at one to produce an efficient force as quickly as possible from the material available and in the circumstances existing. Items (1) and (2) may be stale news to most L.D.V. organisers to-day. Item (3) is a more contentious statement of fact, but I forbear to comment on it.

DAY-DREAMING.—Sometimes, for a brief moment in our busy days, some of us still find time to dream dreams, to indulge in impossible, "wishful thinking." My dream, I confess it as a journalist, envisages a day when newspapers and radio are gravelled for lack of news, when columns are devoted to a cricket match; when letters are poured out in hot dispute about a "record" drought or a "record" rainfall; when, for lack of political events in Europe or at home, the front pages of our journals are turned over to the romance of a peerage case or the divorce of a much-divorced film star; when all the fire and genius of Fleet Street is engaged in reporting a notorious criminal trial. Incredible as it may seem, such things were, and are still clear in my memory. It was only two or three years (years like centuries) ago that the vagaries of our weather kept all Fleet Street agog and all newspaper readers thrilled. Will such times ever come again? Shall we middle-aged men ever see that dawn of sanity? We cannot expect it. If by a miracle the world's petrol supplies went up in a puff of smoke and the war ended to-morrow, the resettlement of Europe would not be accomplished politically and economically in our allotted span. Years and years of sensations and first-class news-matter lie ahead and we can hope for no return to the halcyon days of tremendous trifles. But, if you can spare an hour for dreaming, go to the Temple Library or to *The Times* Office and take down the dusty files and shed a tear for this generation, when you observe what passed for sensation in the Victorian, the Edwardian, eras. Sometimes, before the news bulletins, I listen on the radio to that dismal crooning which in the past decades has become surely the dingiest feature of civilised life. In my day-dream, I ask myself if this is one of the treasures of civilisation for which we are giving our life-blood and treasure, and if we mean to ensure that it shall survive into the ultimate millennium. THE OLD STAGER



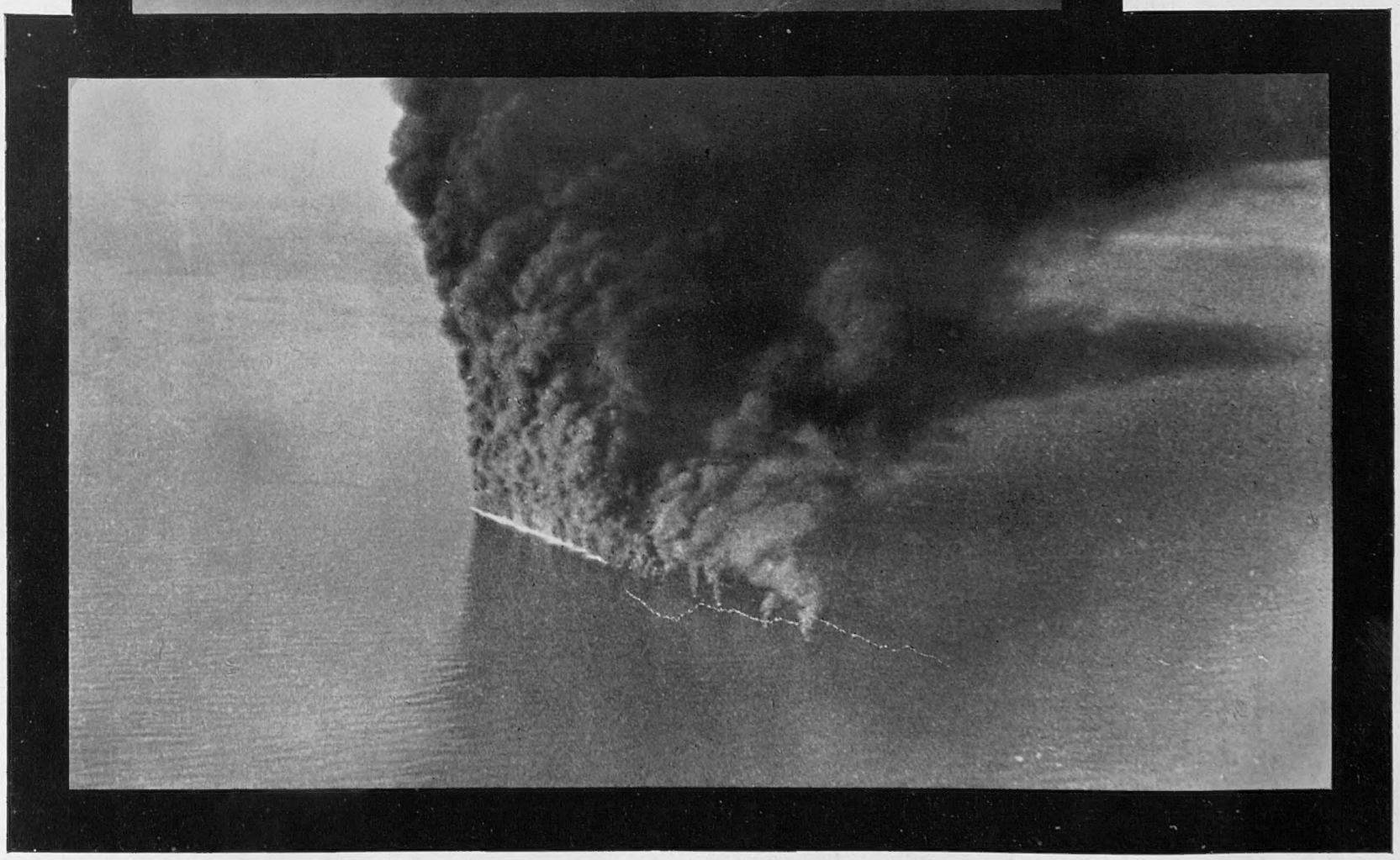
The END of an ENEMY SUPPLY SHIP

The R.A.F. Destroy A Tanker Off the French Coast

As well as protecting these shores from invasion the R.A.F. are carrying the war into enemy territory and enemy waters, maintaining a constant vigil and bombing and destroying without respite. The two official pictures reproduced here have just been released by the Air Ministry. They show the scene at the sinking of an enemy tanker in the Channel off the French coast; the vessel was ablaze from stem to stern when the pictures were taken, even the water being on fire as the oil came to the surface! The aircraft appears to be one of Britain's most famous bombing aeroplanes, the Bristol Blenheim

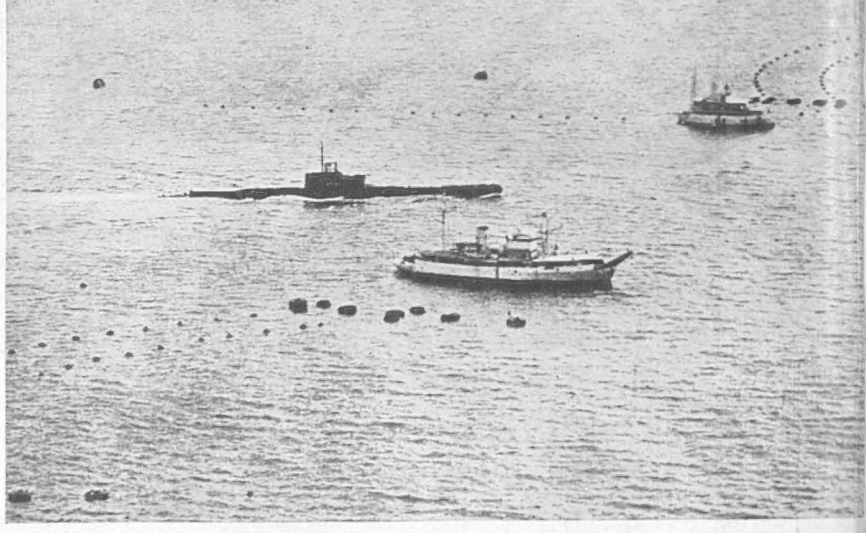
On left—
AN R.A.F. BOMBER WATCHES THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY TANKER IN THE CHANNEL

Below—
EVEN THE WATER IS ON FIRE! THE TANKER GOING UP IN A DENSE PALL OF SMOKE AS THE VESSEL IS DESTROYED

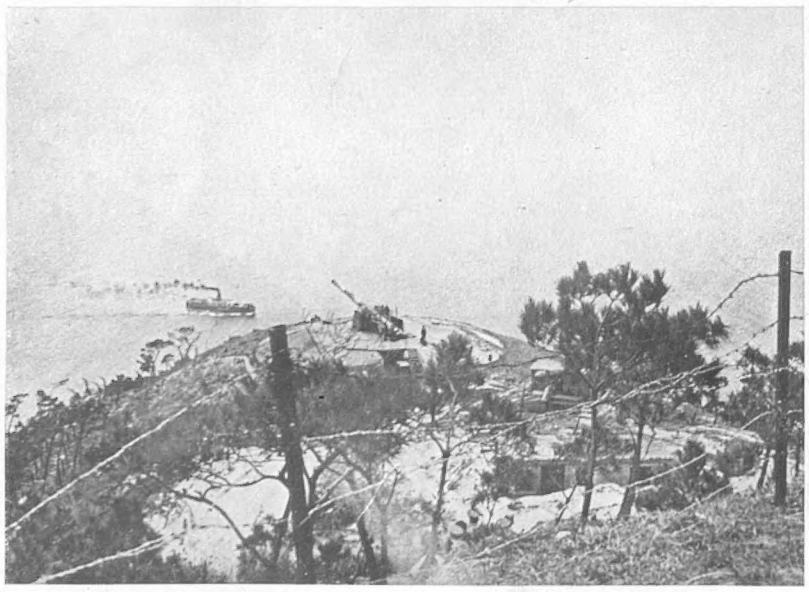


HONG KONG SPARKLING WITH LIGHTS AT NIGHT-TIME: The hilly island, 11 miles long, was, prior to 1839, the resort of a few Chinese fishermen. Subsequent to the cession to Great Britain, the busy up-to-date city of Victoria has grown steadily in size and complexity. The glowing mass of light indicates the position of the centre of the European town; the Chinese quarter lies farther to the right. The lights above indicate the clusters of hillside villas to which residents move in the hottest part of the year

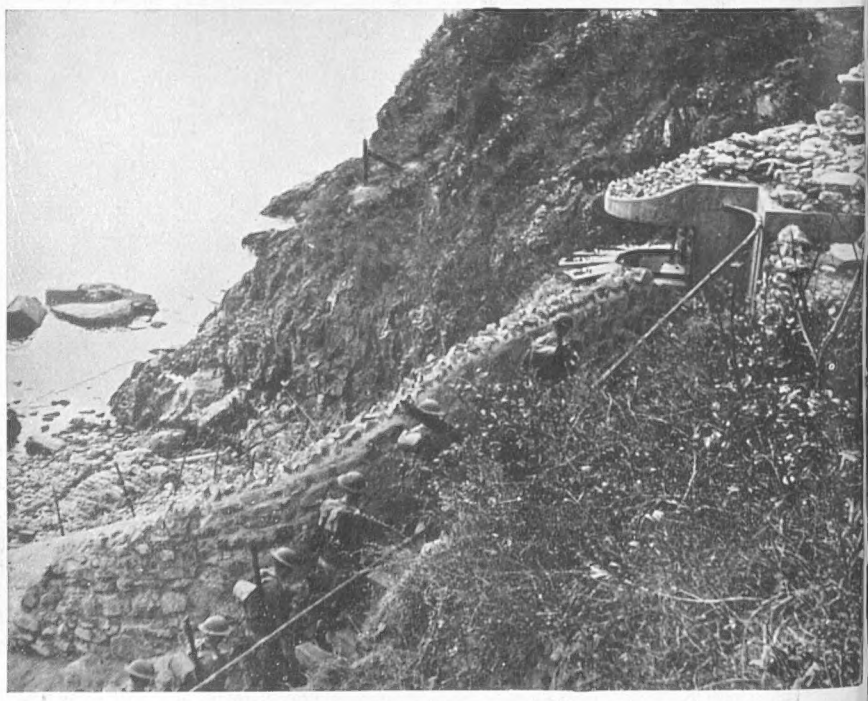
THE GROWTH OF KOWLOON'S COMMERCE: On the mainland, Kowloon has grown greatly during the past few years. This view indicates the extent to which Hong Kong's energies have spread to the mainland. Docks, warehouses, the railway station and airport are all on the Kowloon peninsula. Close to the station is the Peninsula Hotel, regarded as one of the finest in the whole of Asia. Nearly a third of China's foreign trade has been done through Hong Kong



THE BOOM ACROSS THE ENTRANCE TO HONG KONG'S MAIN HARBOUR: The floats indicate the position of the boom; all other entrances are either heavily guarded or closed. A British submarine was passing at the moment when this picture was taken



A GUN WITH A WIDE RANGE: This emplacement—indicative of Hong Kong's preparedness—is perched high above the sea. If the size of the barrel is compared with the figure standing nearby, it will be seen that the gun is a very powerful one

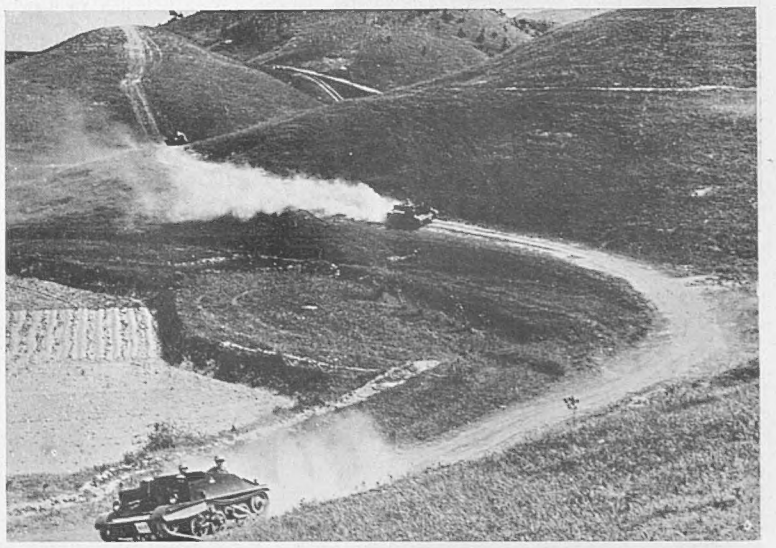


SMALLER GUN EMPLACEMENTS BRISTLE ALONG THE CLIFF SIDE: At a point considerably lower down the cliff this useful gun emplacement has been constructed. It would strongly oppose any attempt by an invader to land

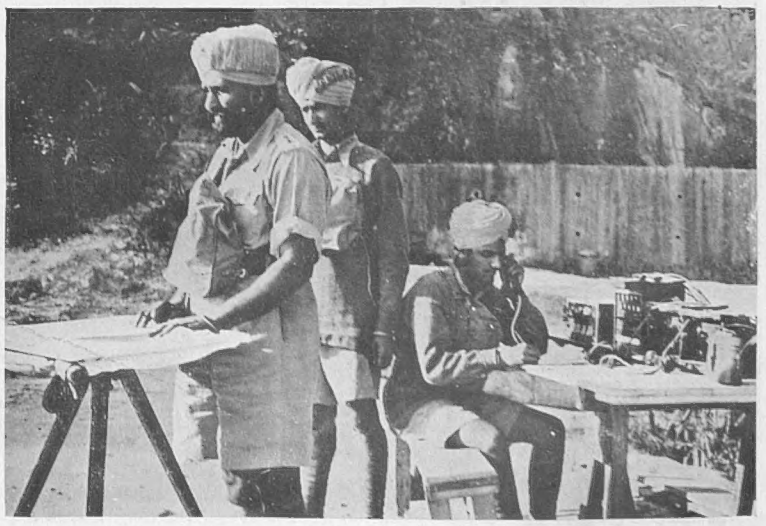
The DEFENCE of HONG KONG, now in a STATE of TENSION

NEW GUN EMPLACEMENTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION ON THE HILLSIDES OF HONG KONG. Hong Kong has been steadily turned into a very strong position since the first serious threats to the peace of Southern China. The various peaks rise up to well over 1,000 ft. above sea level (Mt. Butler 1,376 ft. and Victoria Peak 1,808 ft.). Between them are a number of roads connecting up the various smaller residential and military points

HIGH SPEED NAVAL CRAFT GUARD THE HARBOUR: This type of high speed motor boat has been developed for defence work around Hong Kong during recent months; as they tear through the harbour they rock the time-honoured junks which come sailing in as they have done for centuries past. In past years the China Squadron used to be more or less based on Wei-hai-Wei and officers' wives migrated there from Hong Kong. Now Singapore and places even farther afield are considered safer for British women and children



AMONG THE HILLS OF HONG KONG ISLAND: On the island itself—the real Hong Kong—there are a number of winding roads like this. During recent months the military forces have been familiarising themselves in the task of rapid mobilisation at particular points. Here are several armoured cars rushing to a rendezvous. This particular point may well be 1,000 ft. up



INDIAN TROOPS ASSIST IN GUARDING THE ISLAND OF HONG KONG: Regular troops guard the island and to supplement these the local Volunteer Defence Force was recently mobilised when the land frontier of the Kowloon territory was blockaded by Japanese troops. On more than one occasion during the present crisis the Japanese forces, for diplomatic reasons, have advanced to the frontier and then retired

SEEING WAR-TIME AC

The King and Queen and Other Members of t

THE KING WITH THE BOY MUNITION WORKER: During his inspection of a famous ordnance factory His Majesty appeared unheralded behind little Leonard Fiske, a fifteen-year-old worker who had started work only a day before. Whilst the King chatted to the lad, the latter's fingers never ceased feeding revolver bullets into his little machine

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY, MR. HERBERT MORRISON, INTRODUCES FACTORY OFFICIALS TO THE KING: The visit to the ordnance factory shows the King's keen interest in our armament speed-up. He was told that the workers are now doing seven shifts of twelve hours each per week

THE KING INSPECTS DEFENCES ON THE EAST COAST: During the course of last week His Majesty included in his tours of inspection a surprise visit to an east coast town. Here he was able to see for himself some of the defensive measures which have been taken to guard against invasion, and to inspect officers and ratings

PIPING THE KING ABOARD ONE OF THE "MOSQUITO NAVY": Whilst on the east coast the King was also able to see some of the Navy's "mosquitoes"—very fast and manœuvrable armed motor boats. The sting of these "mosquitoes" lies in their torpedo tubes and anti-aircraft guns

VITIES FOR THEMSELVES

Royal Family Inspect Some of Britain's War-time Efforts

THE KING VISITS THE WELSH GUARDS: Attended by Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Piers Legh, the King has just inspected the Welsh Guards, who have been re-formed and are now training for further service. The battalion were with the B.E.F. in France and fought their way out by way of Dunkirk

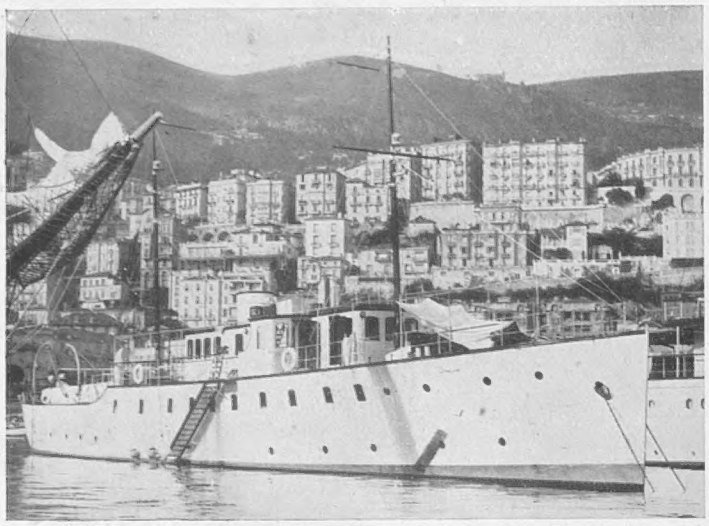
THE QUEEN VISITS TELEPHONE WORKERS IN THE CITY: Whilst the King was busy inspecting munition factories, naval bases and units of the Army, the Queen paid a visit to the Post Office Telephones at Faraday House in Queen Victoria Street in the City

THE DUKE OF KENT VISITS TRAINING UNITS IN SCOTLAND: The Duke is now a Group Captain in the R.A.F. and has special duties in connection with the welfare of personnel. Last week he travelled for five days, visiting various units. Above he is seen chatting to members of the crew of a Hudson bomber during an inspection of an Elementary Flying Training School in south-west Scotland

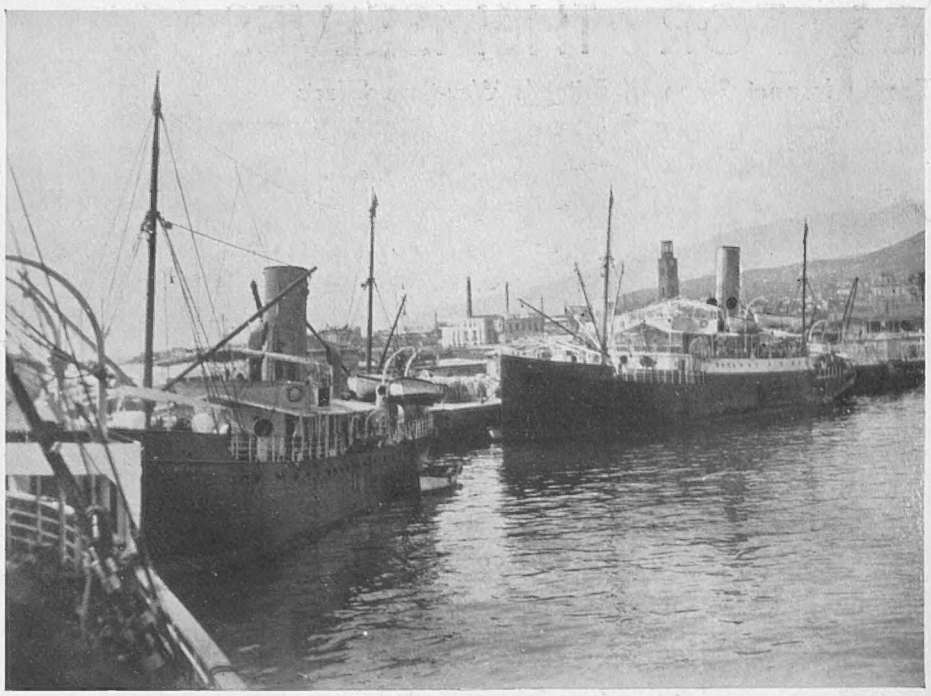
THE DUCHESS OF KENT VISITS THE W.R.N.S. SHOP AT HARRODS: Still another busy member of the Royal Family is the Duchess of Kent. Here she is seen at the Women's Power Exhibition at Harrods, chatting to the Deputy Director, Miss Goodenough

THE NAVY AT WORK

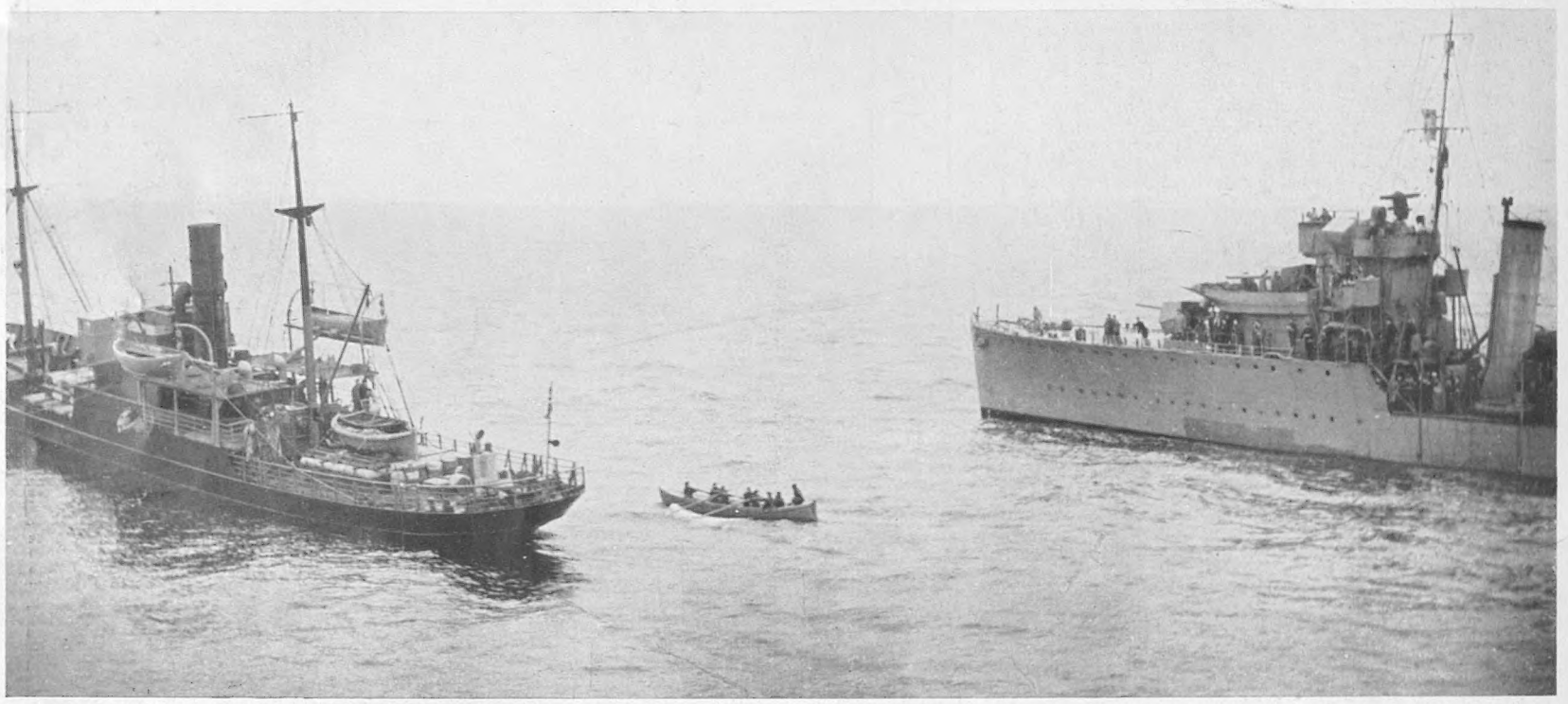
The Action at Dakar; and the Admiralty on the Italian Encounter



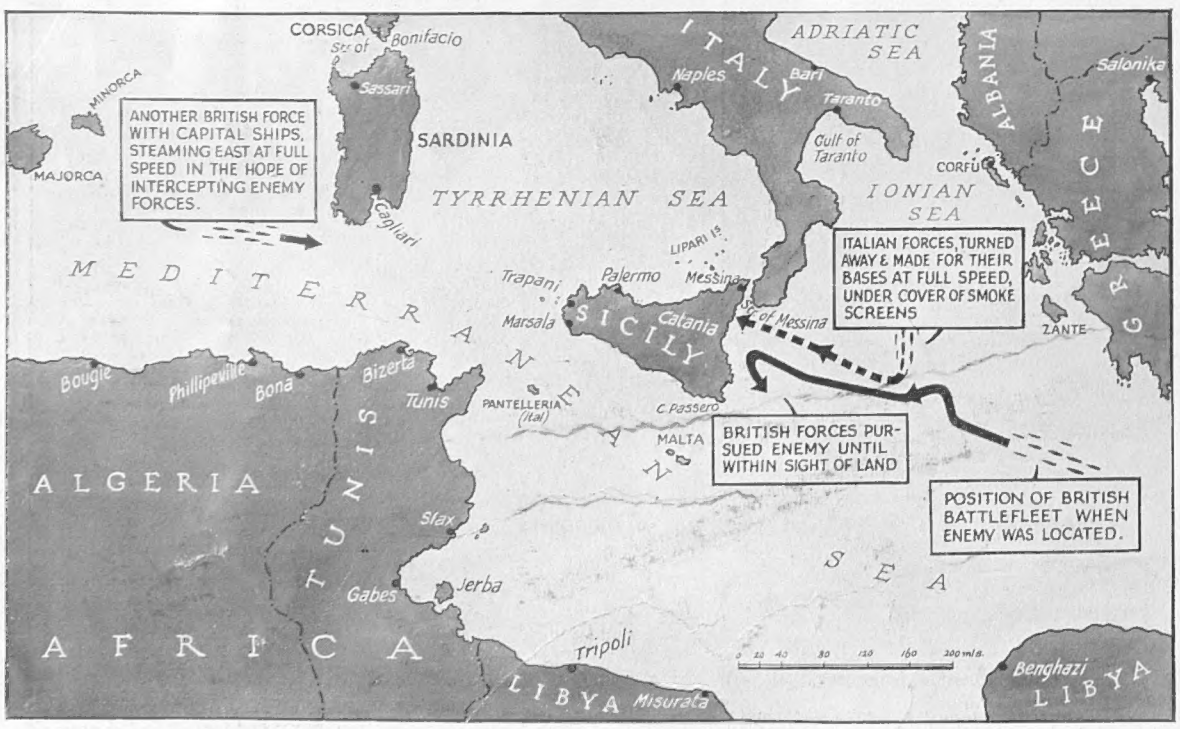
THE "SISTER ANNE" RETURNS TO ENGLAND AFTER GREAT ADVENTURES: This £60,000 luxury yacht, once used by the Duke and Duchess of Windsor for a Mediterranean cruise, has just returned to England with thirty-two of the last "Riviera Refugees." The yacht was at anchor off Cannes when the authorities ordered the Master to scuttle her. The Master said, "I'll get her back to England and I'll be damned if I'll scuttle." Get her back he did, after an amazing voyage during which appalling weather nearly capsized the craft



A VIEW OF DAKAR HARBOUR WHERE THE "RICHELIEU" WAS ATTACKED: On the right-hand page, Mr. Montague Dawson has reconstructed the scene in this harbour when the *Richelieu* was immobilised. The above view shows the fortified naval station which is also the seat of the Government of French West Africa. It is an important port of entry to the regions of the Upper Senegal and Niger, and is a coaling station for French vessels. As evidence of its value to France, between the years 1910-20 its trade increased six-fold



THE BRITISH NAVY IS STILL BUSY IN NORWEGIAN WATERS: The British armies may have evacuated Norway, but the British Navy and R.A.F. are both still active in this part of the world. Supply vessels of the enemy are under constant supervision by both these Arms, and where necessary prompt and effective action is taken to hamper the enemy's effort. The picture we reproduce above has just reached this country; it shows a British destroyer, cruising off the coast, standing by a merchant vessel of which it has become suspicious. A small boat from the destroyer, with a boarding party, is about to investigate the ship's papers and cargo



THE NAVAL ACTION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN—A SPECIAL "SPHERE" DIAGRAM DRAWN UP FROM OFFICIAL MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY THE BRITISH ADMIRALTY WHICH CLEARLY SHOWS HOW THE FLEET ATTEMPTED TO ENGAGE THE ITALIAN NAVY WHICH, HOWEVER, PERSISTED IN FLIGHT

THE ITALIANS REFUSE TO FIGHT

Fuller information of the recent naval operations in the Mediterranean is given in the following Admiralty communiqué. It states: "Reports received during the morning of July 9 established that . . . in the early afternoon contact was made by a squadron of British light cruisers with the enemy cruiser force, which retired immediately on coming within extreme range of our supporting battleships. From this point the action developed into a chase. A few salvos were exchanged between the battleships, and one hit with a 15-in. shell was observed on one of the Italian battleships before the enemy force escaped through a smoke screen laid by their destroyers. The destroyers also retired at full speed through this smoke screen before our light forces could close the range sufficiently to damage them. The enemy was pursued until the British Fleet was in sight of land, and though our forces remained to offer battle until the evening despite a succession of bombing attacks by large forces of Italian aircraft, the enemy did not offer to renew the action. When it became evident that the enemy had no further intention of joining battle our forces continued their operations. The British convoys to which they were acting as a covering force have now arrived at their destination in safety. During this latter phase our ships were repeatedly attacked by aircraft, and three casualties to personnel were caused by bomb splinters. As announced on July 10, another British force had been carrying out a sweep in the Western Mediterranean."

1-60 — 09

PH. PART PAGE.

THE ATTACK ON THE FRENCH BATTLESHIP "RICHELIEU" AT DAKAR: This vessel of 35,000 tons, recently completed by the French, was the most modern and formidable warship afloat to-day. At the time of the action against the French Fleet at Oran, it also became necessary to safeguard the future of the *Richelieu*. Accordingly Lieut.-Commander R. H. Bristowe, stockbroker-turned-sailor, carried out a most daring exploit: he took in a small motor boat and penetrated the harbour defences at Dakar, bringing up alongside the huge warship. He dropped depth-charges round the stern of the battleship to destroy her steering gear and propellers, and then raced to rejoin the British squadron waiting outside the harbour. Unfortunately his engines broke down whilst he was still in the harbour; the French in pursuit had just located him when Lieut.-Commander Bristowe's crew got one engine going, and the motor boat was able to escape across the harbour nets. As they lay helpless in the harbour, the crew of the motor boat witnessed the main attack on the *Richelieu* by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm: later it was established that the battleship was listing to port and was down by the stern and the water around was covered with oil

LIEUT.-COMMANDER ROBERT H. BRISTOWE, who carried out the attack on the *Richelieu*

WHEN A SUBMARINE COMES HOME

LT. W. D. A. KING, D.S.O., R.N., IN THE CONNING TOWER OF THE SUBMARINE "SNAPPER"

A few weeks ago *Snapper* was in the news after she had sunk four German ships: for this feat her commander was awarded the D.S.O. Once again, *Snapper* has returned safely to Britain, with the news that she has sunk a further five German ships being convoyed in Norwegian waters! An Admiralty communiqué stated that Commander King sighted a convoy of supply ships escorted by an armed trawler and aircraft. Two ships were hit by torpedoes and the remnants of the convoy scattered and made off in disorder for the shelter of a fiord. Later the *Snapper* sighted a large convoy also escorted by armed trawlers and aircraft, and a further successful attack was carried out, when three more ships were hit by torpedoes. *Snapper* is a submarine of the Shark class which have distinguished themselves greatly during recent months. Her sister *Salmon* sighted the *Bremen* and afterwards sank a submarine and torpedoed two cruisers. *Spearfish* torpedoed the pocket-battleship *Admiral Scheer*. *Seawolf* destroyed 8,000 tons of shipping in one patrol, and *Sealion* sank a big German supply ship. *Snapper* has a complement of forty and cost about £240,000 to build. Unfortunately, the submarine *Shark* herself (after which the whole class is named) was announced as overdue on Monday last. The Admiralty have presumed that she is lost and have informed the next of kin

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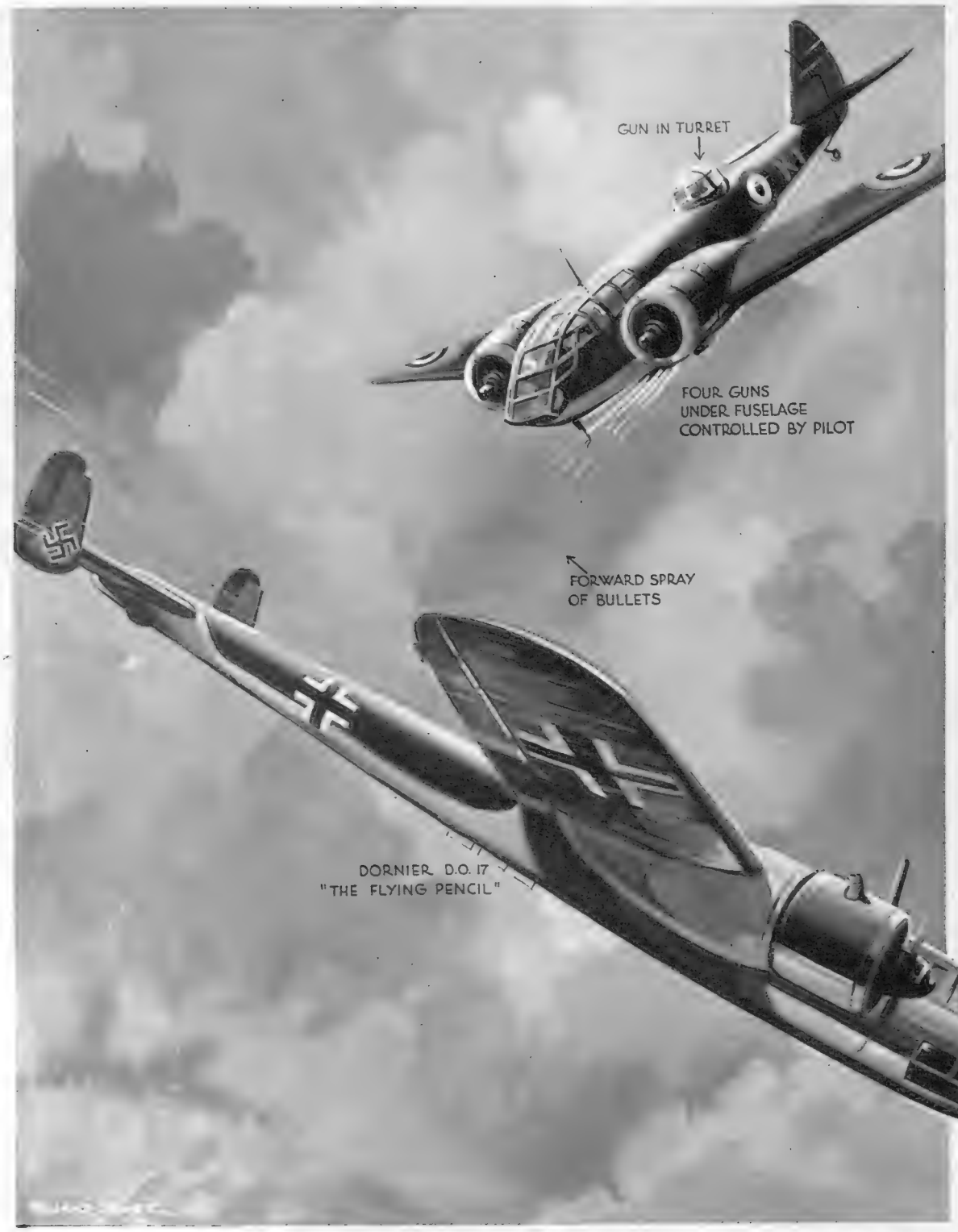
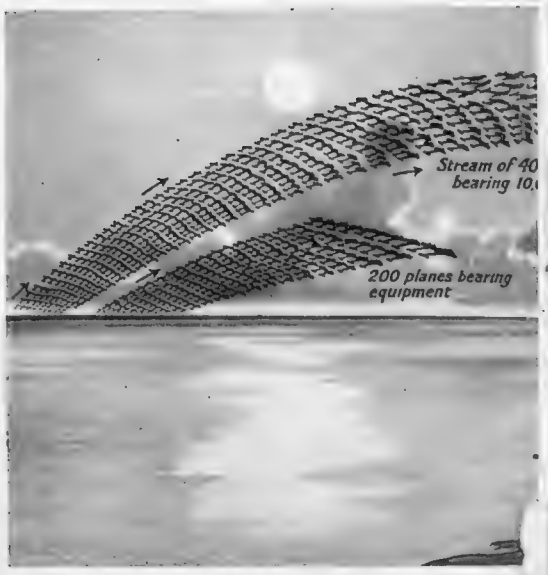


A BRISTOL BLENHEIM FIGHTER ATTACKING ONE OF THE GERMAN "FLYING PENCILS"

This drawing has been based by Roland Davies on various recent Air Ministry reports which have detailed the participation of Bristol Blenheim fighters against enemy bombers. Originally named the "long-nosed Blenheim," it has had its nose extended by some 3 ft. and has improved navigation and bomb-aiming facilities; it also has additional tanks in the wings increasing the range to 1,900 miles—a very useful performance. With the same effective war load as the original aircraft, the new Mark IV bomber-fighter has a maximum speed in the neighbourhood of 300 m.p.h. Its adversary in Mr. Davies' drawing reproduced above is a Dornier .DO 17, nicknamed from its general outline the "Flying Pencil." This is the twin-engined high-performance bomber which the Germans have been using in large numbers in air raids over Britain. It has a speed—like the Blenheim Fighter—of about 300 m.p.h.



WILL GERMANY INVADE BRITAIN BY AIR? If she be only a small part of the fleet of aeroplanes she would

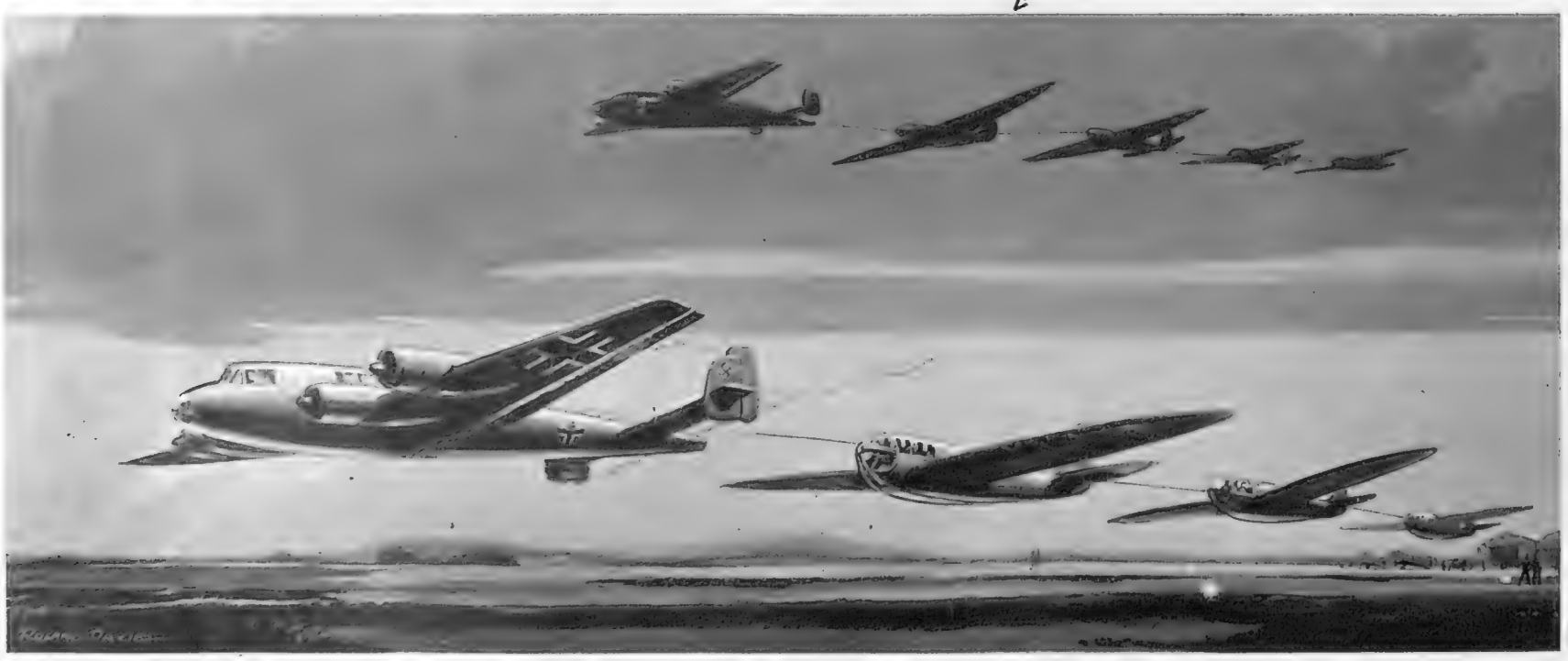
INVASION BY GLIDER?

Much has been said and written about carrying troops in gliders towed behind power-driven aeroplanes. The answer to the question "Can it be done?" is yes; to the question "Is it worth while?" the answer is no.

I have seen in Germany three sports-planes, of about 60 h.p. each, towing three single-seat gliders each so that, when they cut loose, the nine gliders performed pretty evolutions before landing. The method of taking off evidently is for the machines to be hitched to the train with a spring in their tow-lines. The towing machine takes off and is fully air-borne when the pull comes on the first glider. That again has its full momentum when the pull of the second comes on. And the train is well under way when the third is picked up.

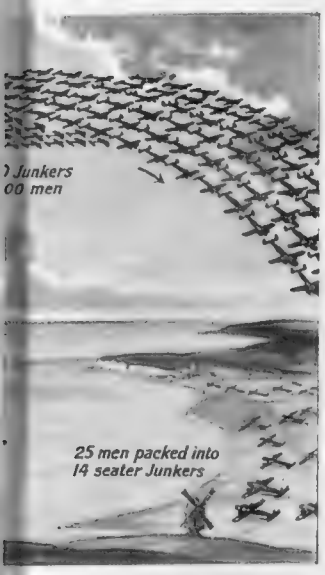
The tow-line between each two machines has to be many yards long (40 at a guess) so that if they were all laid out in a line to start simultaneously they would need an enormous length of ground. That applies to light single-seat gliders. Heavy gliders to carry ten or twelve men apiece—anything less would not be worth while—would take correspondingly longer and more room. Moreover, to fly at any worth-while speed for a long journey the natural speed of the gliders would have to be high, which would mean a longer take-off and a faster landing and a greater chance of crashing. Single-seat gliders land slowly and safely because their flying speed is low. Furthermore, a train of gliders would be quite unmanœuvrable, and would be an easy target for any sort of fighter.

The idea that gliders can approach silently is of no account. Enemy aircraft are spotted by sight as much as by sound. The gliders could be released six or eight miles, or perhaps even ten, from the coast but the towing machine would probably have been heard. And there are few places anywhere near the coast where the landing of a few gliders would be worth while.—C. G. GREY.



Drawings by Roland Davies

GERMANY IS REPORTED TO BE "ASSEMBLING" LARGE GLIDERS IN NORWAY: If they are intended for towing across the North Sea this is what the German Air Armada might look like. But before assuming that such a method of invasion is possible we advise our readers to study Mr. Grey's contribution on this subject published in the box above



intends to do so, the above would have to employ for the purpose!

THE TRAGIC STORY OF FRENCH AVIATION

A Doleful Tale, Unfolded

By C. G. GREY

RATHER naturally we in this country are interested in the reasons for the collapse of the French Army and Government. One point on which all soldiers seem to agree is that the first great break-through by the Germans succeeded largely because of their tactical use of aeroplanes. They sent over masses of dive-bombers which performed in front of their tanks the same function as General Horne's creeping artillery barrage performed for our infantry in the last war. The dive-bombers beat the infantry into the ground, and by the time the bombers had passed and the infantry sat up and took notice the tanks were on top of them. And now the soldiers want to know why the French Air Force, the *Armée de l'Air*, allowed it to happen.

The answer is that the *Armée de l'Air* was too weak to stop it. Everybody who was interested in the air forces of the nations knew before the war began that the French Air Force was in a bad way.

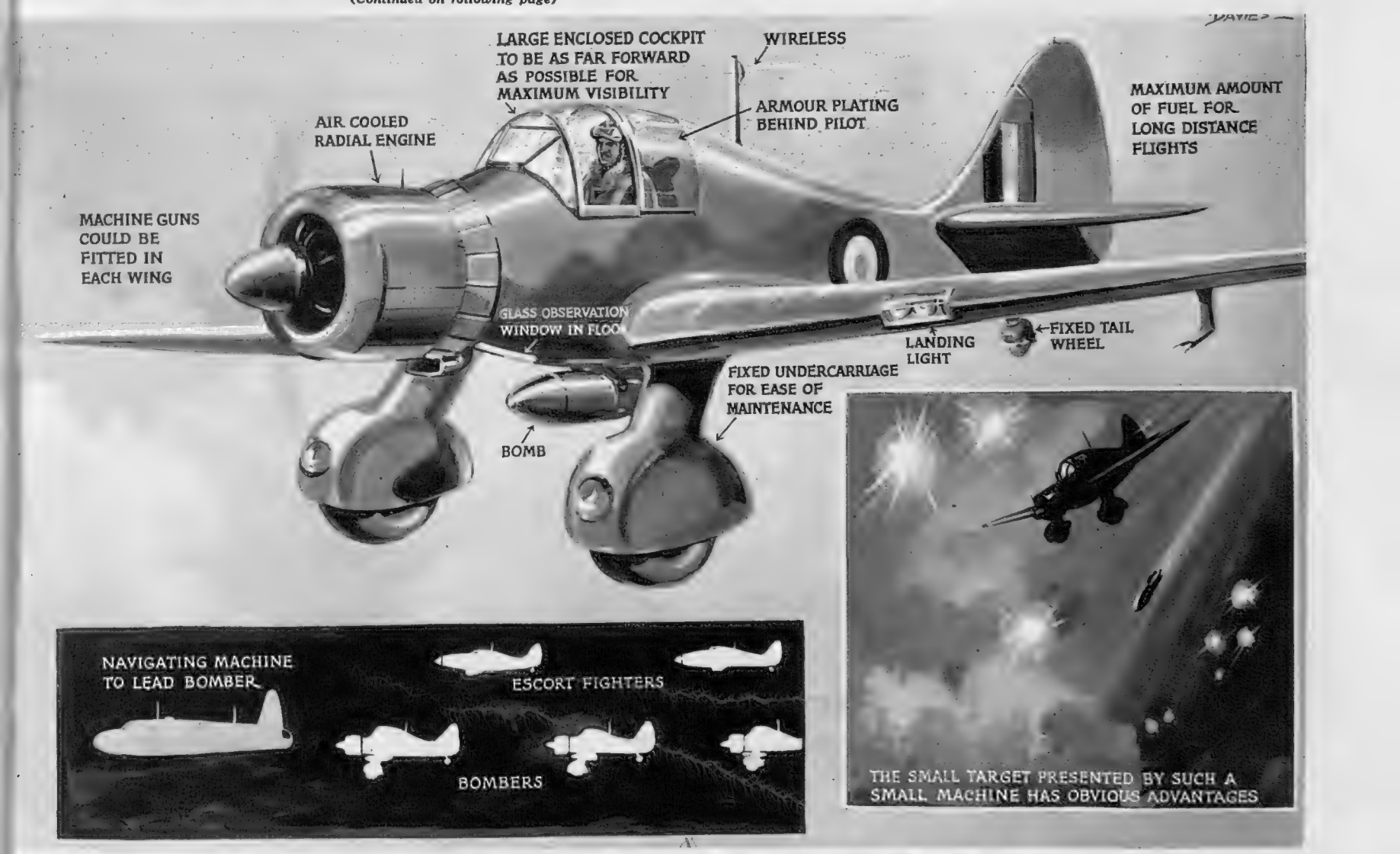
There has never been any lack of first-class pilots in France. The French taught us to fly. French "Aces," as they called them in the last war, were many. But the French were then short of what one might call good second-class pilots, which was why when a German air squadron had been badly hammered on our front, it was, as a habit, sent down to the French front for a rest. But still there were plenty of war-worthy pilots and air crews in France in 1939. The trouble was that they never had enough aeroplanes.

The reason was that just about when we were starting our panic expansion, after Mr. Baldwin's lamentable policy of disarmament, influenced by the imagined voting power of the League of Nations Union, under Lord Cecil of Chelwood, the French were in the grip of the Government of the *Front Populaire*. Under that Government French aircraft production practically ceased to exist.

The officers of the *Armée de l'Air* were heart-broken. They had to do their flying on antique types which ought to have been on the scrap-heap five or ten years before. They knew that in the drawing offices of the old established aircraft firms there were designs for fighters and bombers as

(Continued on following page)

THE DIVE-BOMBER IN ACTION OVER A HOSTILE WARSHIP: In this picture the artist has imagined himself in the pilot's seat of a dive-bomber. The aircraft has approached the enemy fleet and has singled out the particular warship he means to attack. Diving down from his approach height of, say, 10,000 ft., the pilot swoops down to 2,000 ft. until he gets his objective fair and square in his tiny sighting ring (here seen larger because it is close up to the artist's eye). At this moment he gives his bomb-aimer the signal to let go: the latter, of course, has also been busy on the way down with his own independent sights. Owing to the great forward speed the bomb will be released some half-mile before the aircraft actually reaches the warship. As soon as the bomb is released the pilot will begin to pull out of range of the anti-aircraft barrage



THE ONE MAN, ONE MACHINE, ONE BOMB, SUGGESTION MADE BY MR. CHARLES GREY IN A RECENT "SPHERE" ARTICLE

In the issue of this journal published on July 6 "The Sphere's" air correspondent, Mr. Charles Grey, made the following statement—"In years past I have argued in favour of one man, one machine, one bomb, with a fleet of defensive fighters to escort the bombers. On long raids naturally the bombers would be led by a navigating machine which would need a crew of two or three, and consequently would carry no bombs." This is so contrary to accepted practice in this present war that Mr. Davies has here put Mr. Grey's idea into visual form, and shows what such an aircraft would look like; how it would operate in actual bombing operations; and how it would be escorted by fighters with a navigating aeroplane ahead. The principal arguments in favour of Mr. Grey's suggestion would appear to be these—the large enclosed cockpit would be as far forward as possible to give the pilot maximum visibility during his dive on to the target; owing to the lightness of the load carried—in personnel and in bombs—the aeroplane would carry the maximum amount of fuel for long distance flights; the pilot's seat could be armoured to withstand bullets and shells, and the undercarriage could remain fixed; the much smaller aeroplane would present a greatly reduced target to the anti-aircraft gunner; losses, when incurred, would be far less costly than with big bombers. In the drawing the artist also shows the manner in which these small bombers would be escorted to their destination by fighter aircraft and led by a navigating machine

THE TRAGEDY OF FRENCH AVIATION

(Continued from preceding page)

good as any in the world and better than most. But they were not built.

The Popular Front Government tried to nationalise or Communise the French aircraft industry, which had been built up by keen sporting competition, one firm against the other. Practically all the great flying contests, with the exception of that for the Gordon Bennett Trophy, since the dawn of aviation, have been French. There was the Coupe Schneider, and the Coupe Deutsche de la Meurthe, Coupe Michelin, and the Coupe Blériot, and various other minor trophies, far more than we ever had in this country. And the French won them all. And by constant competition, and by going for flying records, French aeroplanes had become very good. But Socialising the French aircraft industry ruined it.

The men who had built up the great firms and were regarded as *le Patron* by the workers, faded out before the Government appointees who were generally about as effective as a Russian Kommissar.

Output was disorganised by shifting the works about from one place to another, and dragooning them into groups which did not improve relations one with another, and generally the industry was messed up. Liberty, equality, fraternity in the aircraft works meant that the men had liberty to knock off work when they liked, that they were the equal of their foremen or managers, and that they quarrelled among themselves like brothers. The result was that when the French aircraft industry, if its output had been proportionate to the population of France, ought to have been turning out about 1,000 machines a month, the output sank to, I believe I am accurate, in one month not more than a couple of dozen aeroplanes.

Yet those were the people who had built up by sheer heroism and the highest kind of patriotism that terrific Aéropostale air line from France round Africa across the South Atlantic down to Argentina and across to Chile. The story of *La Ligne* by Jéan-Gerard Fleury is an epic which lays flat any romance of flying. It can be got in any good French bookshops in London, and it shows what the true Frenchman can do when properly led and organised. It also shows that he does not even need the best material so long as he has enough of it.

During that lamentable period in the French industry a friend of mine went round one of the workshops with the man who had been *le Patron* and had built it up.

The men were sitting about under the machines playing cards and smoking. They did not stand up when he came along or greet him as the naturally well-mannered French mechanic does when his boss comes along.

The *Front Populaire* was succeeded by another bunch of politicians, who were frightened at what they saw coming, and they succeeded in scaring the workers. The men set to work with that Gallic fury which can come near to performing miracles. But they were too late. So the *Armée de l'Air* had not a chance against the German bombing barrage.

Blaming the Finance Ministers and the senior officers of the Army and Navy is merely an excuse. If money without limit had been available there was a political period when the work could not have been done.

At the last the French pilots did put up a fine show. Right at the end a friend of mine was down at Hyères, when a squadron of Italian Fiat fighter biplanes attacked the aerodrome. They shot up machines on the concrete apron, they pulled up and caught an unfortunate pupil in an elementary trainer and shot him down. Then they came round and shot up the apron again. All the while, apparently unseen by the Italians, a French pilot in a Dewoitine fighter was watching, high up, instead of mixing in the vulgar brawl of a dog fight.

When the Italians had fired off their ammunition and started for home, the Frenchman in the Dewoitine came down on them like a hawk and shot down six in a row. So he at any rate has done his bit.

May I here put in a word for Lord Londonderry's appeal last week that people who live near aerodromes out in the country should offer hospitality to R.A.F. officers and airmen. As he says, there are to-day fewer great houses which can be thrown open to officers on leave, as they were in the last war. But, he adds, "there are a good number of country places, the homes of professional men, gentlemen farmers, manufacturers, etc., etc., who are thoroughly representative of British country life. I would suggest to these that they should let the O.C.s at the local aerodromes know that they will be pleased to entertain officers and airmen of the Air Force."

During the recent strenuous times, fighter squadrons have been up three or four times a day, and sometimes at night, hunting raiders. Bomber squadrons have been out night after night over Germany. Engine fitters and aircraft riggers have been constantly at work keeping machines fit to fly.

A number of Station Commanders have adopted the plan of *ordering* officers and men off the station for twenty-four hours once a week. If a man goes on voluntary leave he is apt to have a feeling that he has rather let the other fellows down by going off to enjoy himself. But if he is turned out of the station that subconscious irritation disappears and he can enjoy himself with a clear conscience.

But people on stations away out in the country have difficulty in "going places" in twenty-four hours. And anyhow lots of men in these serious days do not want to go rioting about in London. People from the Dominions and Colonies would often like to spend the twenty-four hours in a real English home. Some would like to go fishing or shooting. Some would like to play about a farm or look round parkland, or explore the country. The great thing is to get them off their stations and their minds off their work for twenty-four hours.

The young aviator of to-day, whether a commissioned officer or an airman, is as a rule a steady-going chap. Naturally one cannot have so many tens of thousands of people without the odd bad hat among them, but on the whole they do not waste their substance on riotous living as did their predecessors of twenty years and more ago.

There is less of the "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die" feeling about. It seems to be rather "Let us eat and drink and be merry within reason, for we have a job of work to do." I think that the success of the parachute, the lifebuoy of the air, and the much greater reliability of aeromotors and the aircraft themselves has done much to remove that recklessness that was so common among aviators of the last war. And just because we want these men to be constantly at their best for their own sakes, I do hope that every reader of these notes who can offer hospitality will get in touch with the officer commanding the nearest aerodrome, and let him know what hospitality is available.

Drawings by Montague Dawson

BRITISH BOMBERS AND FIGHTERS OVER THE LIBYAN DESERT: "The most dramatic and picturesque of all flights," states a special correspondent in the Near East, "are those lone night raids which Italian bases and outposts scattered over thousands of miles are learning to dread." Our artist, Mr. Dawson, here gives two impressions of such flights—*on the left* Blenheim bombers flying by night, in the wonderful moonlit and starlit skies; and *on the right* a lone Hurricane going out to do battle in the blazing heat of day. "They circle up into the night—a scene of bewildering beauty," the special correspondent goes on. "Below, the unchanging infinity of the desert is splashed with white moonlight. All around a pitch black sky blazes with millions of stars. For hours, perhaps, they drone through this dead, unearthly landscape, seeking out the objective marked down for destruction. . . . Daylight raids find the desert in another mood. Sandwiched between blazing sky and burning, sunbaked sand, it is like flying through a furnace. Hot blasts of air rising from below toss the plane about wildly unless you fly high. Sweat runs in the eyes of pilots and gunners as they manipulate the delicate machine. But in the daylight, too, there is the same tremendous loneliness. . . ."

LIFE LINES: A SCENE AT THE CENTRAL SIGNAL STATION AT PORTSMOUTH—FROM THE DRAWING BY MAJOR SIR MUIRHEAD BONE

Among Sir Muirhead Bone's work on exhibition is this scene of activity in the historic signal station at Portsmouth. In the centre is seen the base of the mast which formerly belonged to the German cruiser *Nurnberg*, one of the vessels which surrendered to the Grand Fleet off May Island in the Firth of Forth on November 21, 1918

BRITISH WAR ARTISTS' WORK

Now On Exhibition at the National Gallery

A fine exhibition is now being held in the National Gallery; it consists of work by commissioned British war artists and by certain other artists whose work has been purchased by the Ministry of Information's Artists' Advisory Committee appointed in November of last year

AN AIRCRAFT RUNWAY IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION AT THELUS, NEAR ARRAS, ABOUT MAY, 1940: FROM THE PAINTING BY BARNETT FREEDMAN

Mr. Freedman is one of the salaried artists attached to the War Office. This picture of his is remarkable as showing massed activity in connection with Britain's effort in France. This level area at Thelus is swarming with men engaged on constructing a runway for the R.A.F. before the final collapse of the French effort

Drawn by K. J. Petts

PROFESSIONALS AND AMATEURS

During church parade, a few mornings ago, this interesting juxtaposition might have been seen. In the foreground is a platoon of L.D.V.s while in the background a body of regulars swings along barrackwards after the morning service

DEFENDING THE

What the Citizen May Do for the Better Defence of Britain

By NOEL THOMPSON

I HAVE received many suggestions in the past few weeks as to how one's home could be defended if suddenly attacked by a party of invading Germans. Numerous and varied are the rough weapons put forward. Quite the most original comes from a reader in Kensington, who declares that there are hundreds of yards of iron railings there shaped exactly like spears. Take these up and sharpen the ends and you have, he says, a very good weapon. Dig them up by all means, but I still feel that they would be more use as scrap iron.

The point missed in all these suggestions is an important one—that is, what part a civilian may play in war. He is the victim of indiscriminate bombing and shelling, but if an invader finds him with an offensive weapon he becomes a *franc-tireur* and may be shot. Whereas by international law a civilian is protected. It may seem in these days of total warfare a blind alley to talk of international law, but we have tried to observe it. The Germans with their unrestricted murder on the seas, and their mass machine-gunning of helpless refugees, have deliberately set out to flout it on every possible occasion. So that the innocent civilian exists *de jure*, but hardly *de facto*.

Madrid was never captured. Despite bombings, heavy artillery shelling, the attacks of massed armies and tanks, and starvation, the civilians became an army and held out. Warsaw defied capture for longer than anyone thought possible with a few troops backed by civilians. In both cases home-made defences and ready-made weapons sufficed.

All civilians in Great Britain are unarmed. Rifles, shot-guns, and revolvers have been surrendered. But they can, and must, assist in defences. The digging of trenches, pits, machine-gun posts; the filling of sandbags and the assisting of the military in erection of concrete barriers or barbed wire are allowable and essential civil duties.

THE RIFLE IS THE WEAPON WITH WHICH THE L.D.V. MUST BE FAMILIAR

The rifle bullet will carry to 2,000 yards but it is usual to restrict the range to 600 yards. In every way, one must be familiar with the handling of the weapon

The Local Defence Volunteers, now well over 1,000,000, are not civilians; nor, in the case of invasion, should an Area Commissioner call on all able-bodied men to rally to certain points, could they claim any longer to be civilians. I have gone into this point at some length, for while international law has, as I have said, been observed more in the breach than in the custom by the Germans, the position should be clear. And it will not affect the resolution of every Englishman to die rather than give up a yard of his beloved land.

There are certain points in defence and elementary military manœuvres which everyone should learn by heart. Regular soldiers will have learned them in training.

The volunteer and newcomer to our second line of defence will, I hope, be able to acquire some facts in a few minutes which will stand him in good stead in an emergency.

For instance, the average range that a hand grenade will be thrown is between 25 and 30 yards, but remember that a splinter can cause a very nasty wound as much as 100 yards away.

Then the rifle, either yours or the enemy's. It has been claimed before witnesses that an expert fired sixty shots in a minute. That is a fantastic rate which may be true, but a good instructor will manage thirty-five shots, and twenty shots is the average. Maximum range is up to 2,000 yards. A Bren gun can fire 120 shots a minute to a slightly less distance than the rifle. A Vickers machine-gun has a maximum of 2,900 yards and an output of 500 bullets a minute. But in practice see that your posts have a field of fire of between 100 yards and 300 yards and you will obtain the maximum surprise effect and concentration of fire. It is rare to give the order to open fire at anything over 600 yards.

PARLIAMENTARY PARA-SHOTS OF BOTH HOUSES IN TRAINING

Peers, Members of Parliament, and members of the staff of both Houses of Parliament paraded at Little Dean's Yard, Westminster, the home of Westminster School. Included above are—Mr. Orlando Williams, Principal Clerk of Committee and Private Bill Office; the Hon. James Stuart, M.V.O., M.C., M.P. for Moray and Nairn; Major Sir James Edmondson, M.P. for Banbury

AN ACTUAL ENEMY PARACHUTE SUB-MACHINE-GUN

When some parachute troops were dropped in the neighbourhood of Narvik one of the sub-machine-guns carried by them was secured by some Polish officers. The weapon shown above was presented to General Sikorski in London. The hinged butt extension was illustrated in "The Sphere" for June 22

HOMELAND: The People's Desire

Some of the infantry signals have passed into civilian use, such as moving the clenched fist and forearm up and down at your side, meaning double up, and the hand raised above the head for "Halt." But there are other useful ones (in regular use in the Army). "Advance" is the arm swung from rear to front below the shoulder, whereas above the shoulder means "follow me."

To indicate starting up the engine the signal is an imitative movement as though starting a car, whereas "switch off" is the hand, palm downwards, waved across the body.

Valuable rifle signals are: enemy in sight in small numbers—the rifle held high above the head, muzzle pointing to the front; if the rifle is raised and lowered frequently it means the enemy is present in large numbers; but if the muzzle is pointing up, no enemy is in sight.

Enemy aircraft in sight is a succession of long blasts on the whistle (as with the police and wardens) or both hands held above the head and waved. All clear is given by two long blasts on the whistle every five seconds.

I have been trying to help the inexperienced. The townsman, for instance, suddenly told to take cover in open country, would probably make for the largest bush, but in open country they make excellent ranging marks for the enemy. The countryman would make for lighter cover and camouflage himself with hay or foliage. Both would probably be surprised to know that cigarette smoke can be seen in daylight a quarter of a mile away, and the glow of a cigarette at night at least 300 yards, while a struck match may be visible at a mile. It is well worth while remembering also that the face is the most visible part to an enemy—it shows up white, so never look up when enemy aircraft is overhead. Also switch off the engines of motor cars—the exhaust smoke is often a tell-tale.

And now, supposing that you had to take cover suddenly against bullets or shrapnel. Would you know what thickness of material was definitely bullet proof? Here is a guide, of which to me the only surprise is the thickness of brick wall considered necessary. Loose shingle, 9 ins.; brick walls, 21 ins.; sandbags, 27 ins.; loose sand, 45 ins.; earth, 60 ins.; clay, 90 ins.; and peat, 120 ins.

I am not going into details of the digging of weapon pits or crawl trenches for defence. There are probably too many stiff backs, sore hands, and aching arms about the country owing to the unaccustomed exercise, but this is how quickly the Army expects them to be dug in ordinary ground. A weapon pit providing cover and a post for two men should have a parapet of 1 ft. 6 ins. and be 3 ft. 6 ins. wide at the top and 3 ft. deep. One man should dig this in four hours and the same man should be able to dig a crawl trench 1 ft. 6 ins. in depth, 3 ft. 6 ins. in width and 5 yards long in the same time!

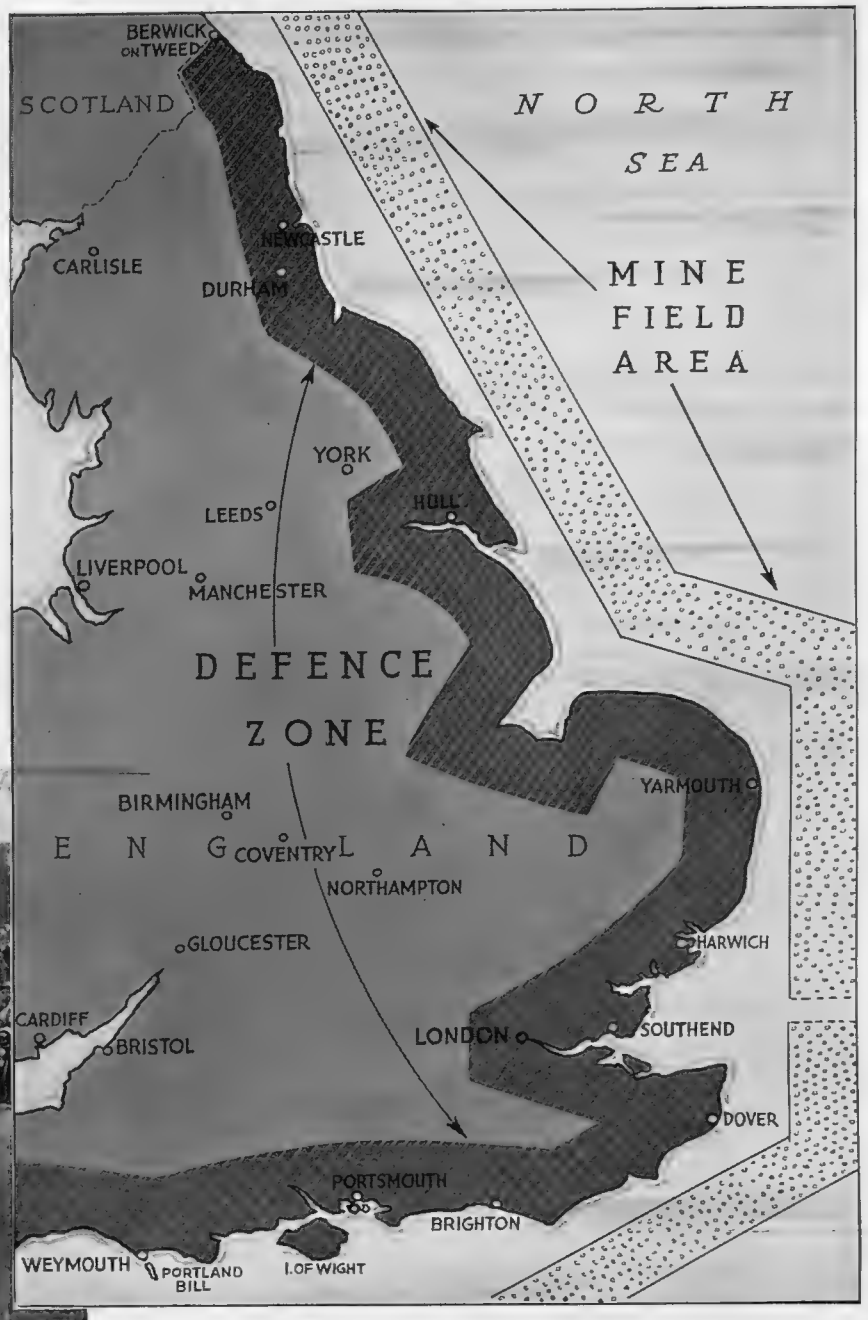
I have dealt for the most part with defence in open country, for town or village fighting in streets calls for tactics of individuality not dealt with in text books. But in the event of an ordered evacuation there are certain things which civilians must do, and not least is to destroy all papers or correspondence which might give any information, and it is surprising how much can be given away, especially by civil authorities. All food should be destroyed and vehicles of any kind smashed up. Clothing (which might be useful to spies) should be burned, and lighting and water supplies if possible made useless by smashing fuses or boilers. *But unless the evacuation is ordered, everyone must stay exactly where they are.*

Should street fighting ever come, here are three hints from an expert. First, the back gardens and yards are probably the safest line of advance. Next, the right hand side of the road is the safer up which to advance, because riflemen, firing from the right shoulder, must expose themselves more to view in order to aim; and thirdly, don't forget the cellars, which should be cleared out if necessary with a hand grenade.

Unavoidably this has been a brief survey, but I hope that I have brought forward points which will be of value if invasion comes and we are all of us called on to fight grimly with our backs to the wall, a citizen army behind our regular army. At least, to end on a light note, we hope no L.D.V. has to fall so low as to take advantage of the regulation for written messages, that "if no message form (A.F. C2128) is available, messages may be written on any paper."

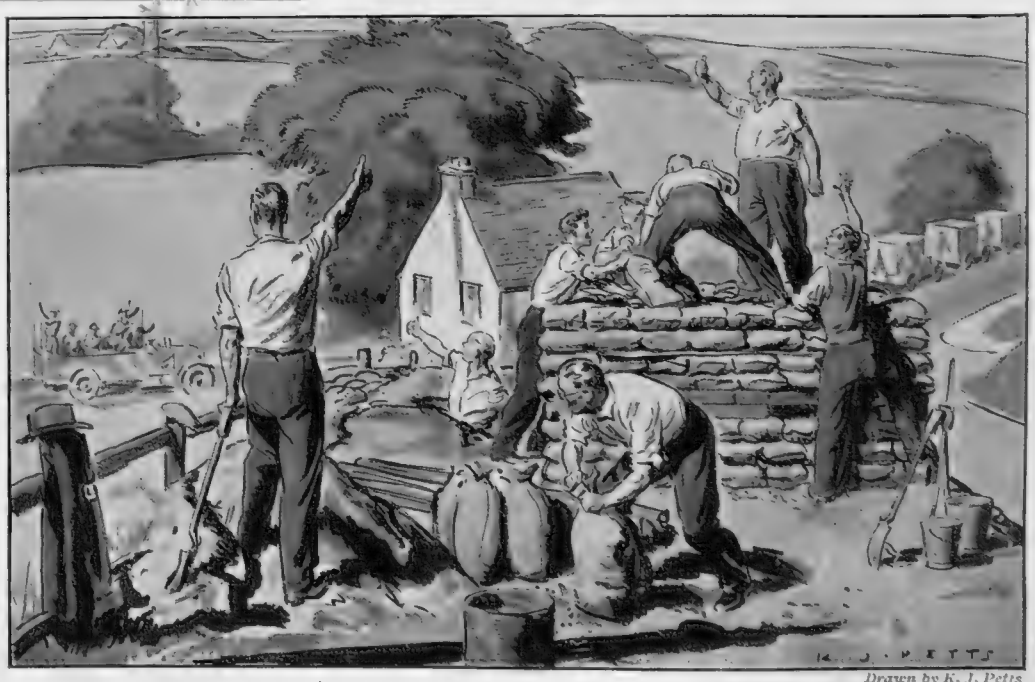
THE MOTOR CYCLISTS GET THEIR CHANCE TO HELP

The Cheshire Motor Cycle Dispatch Corps, a volunteer body, have just had a first run with gas-masks and other new equipment



THE COASTAL DEFENCE AREA CLOSED TO THE HOLIDAY-MAKER AND CASUAL VISITOR

The 20-mile zone of country bordering the Channel and the North Sea now stretches from Weymouth to Berwick-on-Tweed. Outside is shown the approximate position of the minefield guarding the coast from enemy attack on shipping proceeding up or down the coast



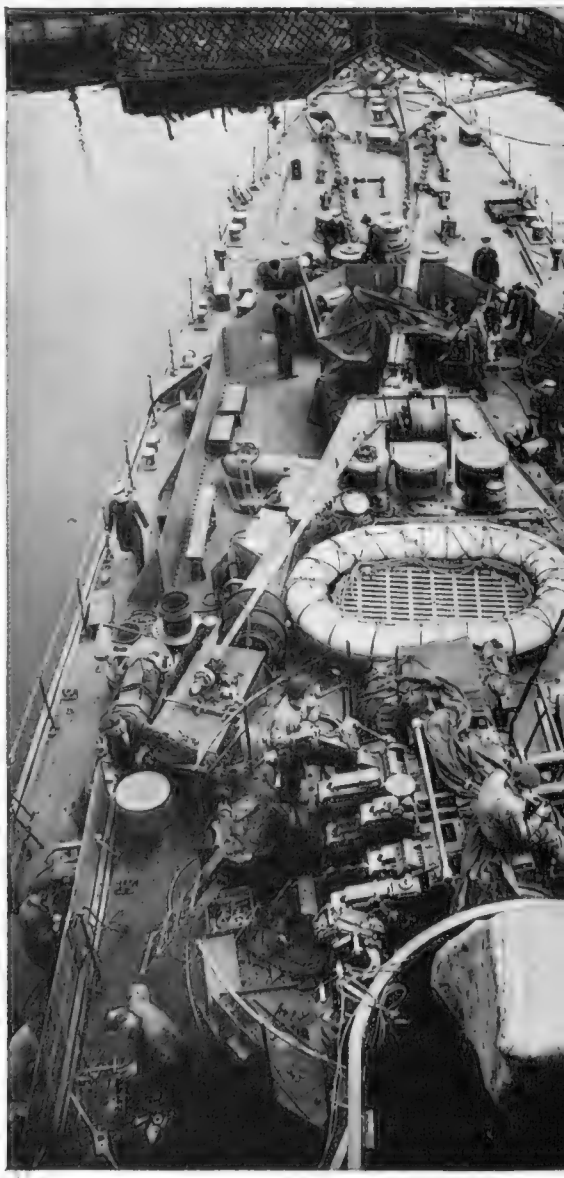
Drawn by K. J. Petts

THE L.D.V.s AND THE REGULARS WORK SIDE BY SIDE

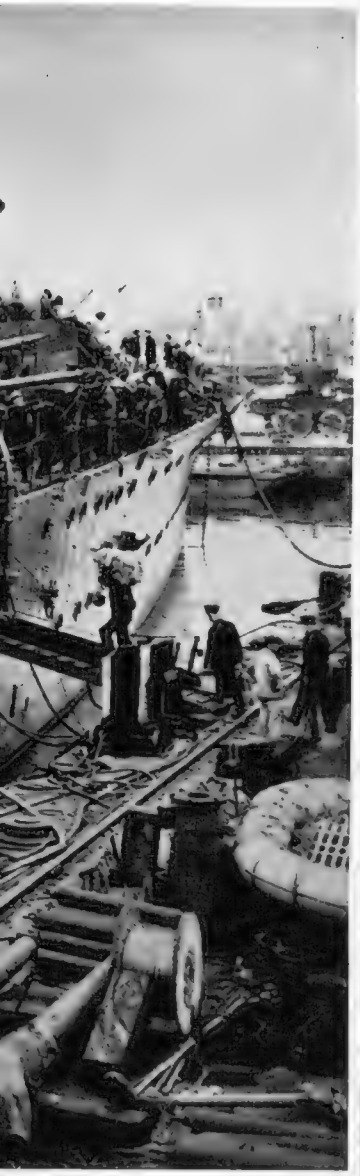
This group of L.D.V.s "somewhere in the country" paused for a few moments to exchange greetings with a convoy of soldiers passing along the nearby main road. Our artist happened to pass this little L.D.V. post when the incident occurred

A HIVE OF ACTIVITY, WITH SCORES OF WORKMEN GATHERED AT EVERY VITAL POINT: H.M.S. "COVENTRY," ANTI-AIRCRAFT CRUISER, IN THE FITTING-OUT BASIN AT A BRITISH NAVAL DEPOT FOR AN OVERHAUL

IN ADDITION TO OVERHAULING THE SHIP'S ARMAMENT, THE VESSEL HAS ALSO TO BE RE-VICTUALLED FOR HER NEXT COMMISSION: HERE SAILORS ARE SEEN CARRYING BAGS OF POTATOES ON BOARD; HIGH ABOVE ON THE BRIDGE A SIGNALLER IS AT WORK COMMUNICATING WITH THE SHORE



ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS OCCUPY MUCH OF THE DECK S BEING OVERHAULED BY WORKMEN, WHILST TH THE ANTI-MINE PARAVANES. THE WHOLE PICTURE



CE IN "COVENTRY": THESE ARE MEN IN BLUE ARE BUSY WITH ONE OF ORDERLY CONCENTRATION

THE RIVETTERS' BOY WITH HIS PORTABLE FORGE IN A "QUIET" CORNER OF THE DECK: BEYOND ARE DOCKYARD WORKERS OVERHAULING THE OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE GEAR OF THE CRUISER DURING HER REFITTING

A BRITISH SHIP Comes HOME to REFIT

A Special Series Showing the Preparation of a Warship for Sea

The average landsman has little idea of the swarming activity which descends upon a ship of the Royal Navy when she comes home from a spell of duty and prepares immediately for another war-time commission. Leave must be arranged for her company; engines, armament and gear must be overhauled and repaired; paint and brasswork restored to that standard of perfection demanded by the Royal Navy; new kit must be issued where required; and ammunition and stores of all kinds replenished. Skilled workmen from the dockyard set about their various tasks with a will, sharing the deck with those members of the crew who also have jobs to do in connection with the refit. The variety of these jobs is bewildering to the landsman; and all are carried out within a confined space, every foot of deck being occupied by hordes of busy tradesmen.

H.M.S. *Coventry*, which forms the subject of these special pictures, is an anti-aircraft ship of 4,290 tons. She was reconstructed and rearmed in 1935, and now carries a complement of 400. In view of her particular function, *Coventry* carries a heavy anti-aircraft armament of ten 4-in., one multiple pom-pom, and ten smaller guns. She is oil-fired and has a speed of 29 knots.

WHILST OTHER HEAVY WORK IS PROCEEDING ELSEWHERE A PARTY OF SEAMEN ARE BUSILY ENGAGED ON THE FUSING OF SHELLS ON DECK READY FOR THE NEXT CRUISE OF THE "COVENTRY"

The WAR

SOME OF THE 200 SMALLER CRAFT OF THE FRENCH NAVY TAKEN OVER BY THE ROYAL NAVY: Mr. Winston Churchill has made reference to the "200 smaller but extremely useful minesweeping and anti-submarine craft which lay for the most part in Portsmouth and Plymouth, and some at Sheerness" which were taken over when action against the French Fleet was decided upon. Here are some of these "Little Ships": on the left is an escort vessel—this is a type of sub-destroyer similar to those built in the Italian and Japanese Navies; their utility in modern warfare cannot be too highly emphasised. Next to this vessel is a destroyer; and the other boats are submarine chasers, the upper works of which—heavily protected—will undoubtedly prove highly interesting to naval readers

ON the naval side this war is proving just like the last, and many others before it, and is giving most of the fun and excitement to the little ships commanded by comparatively junior officers. Their brothers in the heavy squadrons, with only an occasional chance of direct action, envy them their lot, but they know that it is the reserve of the big ships, who may be called out only once in the campaign, which really keeps the seas and which permits the little fellows to do their exciting jobs.

But the little ships of all types, from destroyers downwards, are constantly at work with the immediate backing of the cruisers and the battle squadrons in reserve behind them. It has been the same for 300 years past and more; every naval war calls for large numbers of small craft which are never available to begin with and which have to be hurriedly built and manned when operations have actually started. Until this new mosquito fleet can be built the position has to be held by ships and men hurriedly drawn from the Merchant Navy — luggers, cutters, brigs, and coasters in the old days; drifters, trawlers, excursion vessels, and yachts to-day. The Navy has never yet been able to get its proper quota of small craft before the actual outbreak of war and probably it never will with the Members of Parliament who vote the estimates so much more interested in record speeds and big guns.

The outbreak of this war did not find the Service in quite such a bad position as did 1914, for the Directorate of Naval Construction and the Admiralty War Staff, at least, had learned the lessons of 1914–18, and as early as the 1927 Estimates they had contrived to slip in a few of the smaller types to replace the war-built sloops, minesweepers, etc., which were obviously beginning to wear out. They could not ask for them in the numbers which were required, for the non-Service politician regards such ships merely as "naval dust" as the witty Frenchman put it, but the need was obvious to the professional eye, particularly with the rapid decline of the sea fishing fleet, and a few minor vessels slipped into the Estimates without show gave the Navy the opportunity of putting them through a thorough test, correcting the design where necessary and giving a certain proportion of naval officers and ratings, at least, the opportunity of getting used to their handling at sea. It was unfortunate that the congestion of the Navy List generally made it necessary to give the command of these little ships to officers who were far too senior to handle them in war, but that could not be helped.

The Admiralty at least avoided the terrible handicaps of 1914, when the outbreak of war found the Fleet without any of the small ships which were necessary to maintain the patrol and minesweeping work—anti-submarine operations on a large scale were soon added—and an immense amount of work had to be done by the trawlers and, when they were unsuitable owing to their low speed, by naval material like obsolete destroyers, torpedo gunboats which had never fulfilled their functions, and sloops which were designed to do a large part of their cruising under sail. As Germany delivered each successive unexpected stroke the Admiralty countered it with remarkable speed; the manner in which new types were brought out to meet the situation was remarkable but it did not compensate for lack of preparation beforehand.

The first naval reinforcement to the trawlers, drifters and yachts was at the demand of Admiral Jellicoe, who wanted a number of seaworthy vessels fast enough to sweep a channel clear of mines ahead of the Grand Fleet. The specialist naval yards were worked to capacity turning out destroyers and these ships had to be built in commercial yards by workmen who were only accustomed to commercial work. There was no time to be wasted and the manner in which these ships—the famous "Herbaceous Border" class which had to tackle every duty—were designed and built reflected the very greatest credit to everybody concerned.

The sloops of the "Herbaceous Border" type—the first fifty were named after the flowers in the garden of the acting librarian in the Admiralty—were splendid little ships and although their displacement was only about 1,200 tons they looked most formidable and the first one which was sunk, before the type became known, was honestly put down as a 5,600-ton cruiser of the Dido type. They had a speed of 16½ knots with a single screw and the machinery of a tramp; they mounted two 4-in. and four small guns when they could get them and they were fine sea-boats. The later ones were built to look as much like merchant ships as possible in order to make them particularly useful for convoying and one of these, the old *Saxifrage*, is now the *President*, off the Thames Embankment. Although the class was originally designed primarily for minesweeping, the ships did comparatively little of that and were used for every conceivable duty. As more standard ships appeared, the later sloops, rather larger and faster, were built to look as much like them as possible, with a single funnel and mast, all of them named after race-horses, but they were not quite as successful as the original "Herbaceous Border" and few of them were as well built.

Minesweeping demanded more and more attention as the Germans built up a huge fleet of submarine

ON PATROL DUTY IN A CALM SEA—A BRITISH DESTROYER TURNING AT SPEED: Britain is very strong in destroyer strength; and this strength has been materially increased since the outbreak of war by vessels of the Merchant Navy, as described by Mr. Bowen in his article. The average British destroyer is between 1,100 and 1,700 tons displacement, and admirers of this type declare that there is no handier vessel in the world

BRITISH DESTROYERS—"THE HANDMAIDENS OF THE NAVY"—STEAMING OUT TO ACTION IN A HEAVY SEA: These are the aristocrats of the "Little Ships," the vessels which are constantly at work, attacking, defending, escorting, even while their bigger sisters are fretting the weeks away at their bases

of the LITTLE SHIPS

The Merchant Navy's Drifters, Trawlers, and Excursion Vessels Carry On Until A New "Mosquito Fleet" Can be Built

Described by F. BOWEN

THE BACKBONE OF THE BRITISH MINESWEEPING FLEET—THE ARMED TRAWLER: Experience in the last war proved the worth of this type of vessel in combating the activities of the German minelayer. In this war a number of these trawlers have been armed, and adapted to deal equally with floating mine, magnetic mine, U-boat and aeroplane. They are to be found everywhere and anywhere around Britain's shores

minelayers. The deep draught trawlers were sacrificed in scores until there was a serious shortage, not only of material but also of the magnificent fishermen who handled them so wonderfully. The Admiralty started to build trawlers and drifters for itself, following closely on the lines which had been proved in the fishing industry, and even built replicas of the whale catchers which work with mother ships in distant seas. They were all capable of doing very fine work in any weather, but they were deficient in speed.

So, over 100 twin-screw minesweepers of 840 tons, with a speed of 16 knots, were ordered, well enough armed to dispose of a submarine if they had the chance and capable of carrying out high-speed sweeps all round the coast. Their disadvantage was a draught of over 8 ft., but the little excursion paddlers which ran from the various holiday resorts, the "butterfly boats" as the deep-sea man called them, had proved themselves fast and with their shallow draught able to pass over most minefields, so the Admiralty took the design of one of them, unhappily not the most successful, and built a number of 820-ton paddlers with a speed of 15 knots. Some very shallow draught tugs of a special design and only drawing 3 ft. 6 ins. with their screws working in tunnels cut in the hull, were converted into the Dance class of sweeper, and dance they did in the least sea. Finally, for lighter patrol work, the eighty-odd patrol gunboats of the 890-ton Kil type were built.

THE PADDLE-STEAMERS ARE ALSO DOING THEIR SHARE OF MINESWEEPING: Many of the steamers which were wont to take holidaymakers for trips round the coasts of this country in peace-time are now engaged on one of the war's most dangerous tasks. Here is the converted paddler *Waverley* at work; note the de-magnetising cable running round the hull

In addition to these there were nearly 600 80-ft. motor launches procured from the United States, a good idea which failed because they were 30 ft. too short to keep the seas in bad weather, and a large number of coastal motor boats for torpedoing big ships or dropping depth-charges on submarines. Altogether the fleet of little fellows which helped the destroyers and the patrol boats, which were really sub-destroyers, to break the back of the German submarine menace in 1918 was a very mixed one.

The men who took them to sea, and who fought so many gallant actions in them, came from every corner of the world. A few officers of the regular Navy served in the Auxiliary Patrol but the great majority were from the Royal Naval Reserve (professional seamen) and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (amateurs). Among the ratings, about 4,000 came from the regular Navy, practically all of them pensioners, 42,000 from the Royal Naval Reserve and rather more than 6,000 from the R.N.V.R. All ranks, from the highest to the lowest, showed an extraordinary spirit and enthusiasm and the success of the service was largely due to that.

Although the ships manned by these officers and men did wonderful things, they would certainly have done better if the Admiralty had been given time to work out and test the plans thoroughly before the ships were built. This was fully realised by the Admiralty after the war, and at the first opportunity, in the 1927 Naval Estimates, they began the construction of small craft which were planned on new lines after a careful study of war experience. They started with the Sandwich type, 1,045 tons, with a speed of 16 knots and an armament of two 4-in. guns and many smaller. They were intended for patrolling in distant waters and minesweeping, but as the international situation changed they were renamed "escort vessels" and rearmed with six 4-in. guns. In the 1931 estimates this type was altered for the Grimsby class, 990 tons, 16 knots and two 4·7-in. guns which were later changed to six 4-in. They were intended for escorting merchantmen from the first and cost about £170,000 apiece. Alongside them the Halcyon class was commenced for minesweeping, 815 tons, 16½ knots, and more lightly armed, costing £100,000 each.

Two years later, under the 1933 estimates, the Enchantress type was started for escort work, although the *Enchantress* herself was spoiled to make her an Admiralty yacht. With a displacement of 1,190 tons, these ships had a speed of nearly 19 knots, mounted six 4-in. guns and cost £220,000 apiece. In order not to waste such ships on inshore work the Kingfisher class was started, 510 tons, 20 knots, mounting only one 4-in. gun and costing about £100,000 each. Other escort types were laid down in subsequent estimates; the Fleetwood class (990 tons, 16 knots, four 4-in. guns) in 1934, the Egret class (1,200 tons, 19¼ knots, eight 4-in. guns) under the 1936 estimates, and the Black Swan type (1,250 tons, 19¼ knots, eight 4-in. guns) under the 1937 estimates.

Finally, just before the war, a type of fast escort vessel, which was really a sub-destroyer similar to those built in the Italian and Japanese Navies, was laid down and special preparations were made for them to be completed as quickly as possible. For some years past, also, motor torpedo boats of very high speed, built according to the ideas of the various private yards, have been ordered and thoroughly tried. The result of this wise policy on the part of the Admiralty, which has apparently been carried out very largely against political opposition, is that the Navy started this war with the nucleus of a mosquito fleet of every type, so that a number of officers and men were accustomed to the ships and knew just what they could do, while the Admiralty had been able to effect the necessary improvements in the first design and had each type all ready for unlimited expansion. Backing all these ships are the destroyers, a magnificent fleet which has been carefully built up year by year with the minimum of opposition and which has already won undying fame, although it has been at the cost of many valuable ships and invaluable men.

THE NEW "SPITFIRES" OF THE SEA: One of the more interesting innovations in naval design of to-day is the motor torpedo vessel. It is a high-speed motor boat which carries a couple of torpedoes as well as a large number of depth-charges for dropping on submarines; it is also armed with from two to eight machine-guns for chasing off enemy aircraft. These motor torpedo boats have a speed of 50 knots, or 55 m.p.h.

AWAY from the FLURRY of WAR

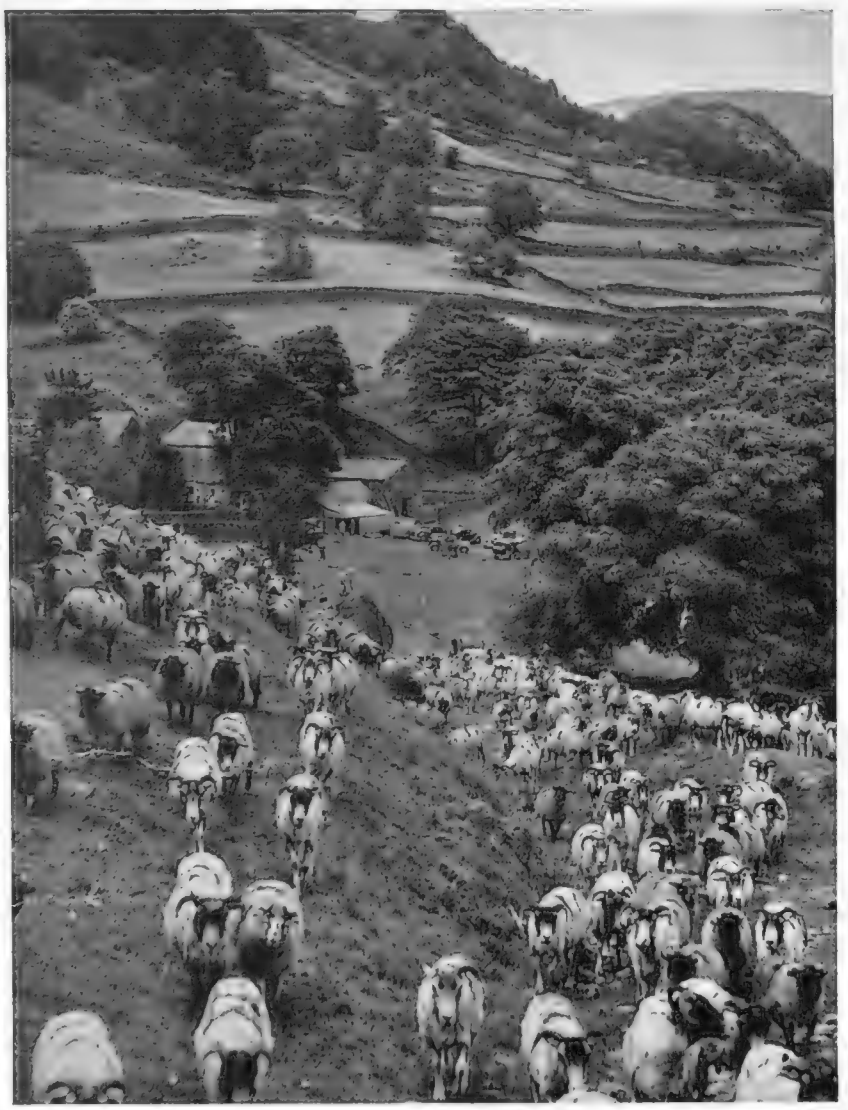
The Rural Life of Britain Goes On Throughout the Countryside

THE BIG ROUND-UP IN THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT: Men at work shearing sheep on a farm in the Swaledale Valley in Westmorland where 10,000 wild mountain sheep have been rounded up at various farms during the past few days. Farmers have been pooling their labourers to assist in the work

WOMEN TRAIN TO HELP LUMBERMEN: Girls of all types and classes from all parts of the country are undergoing a brief training in forestry, prior to joining the Women's Land Army. The girls are to help the Newfoundland lumberjacks who have come to Britain to lend their expert aid. Here two of the trainees are seen measuring cordwood to be used later in chemical research

GUARDING AGAINST SHORTAGE OF FEEDING STUFFS: Silage, or storing of green stuff for winter feeding of cattle, is now one of the most important schemes to meet any future shortage of cattle food. At the Institute of Agriculture at Usk members of the Women's Land Army are busy carting freshly-cut oats, peas, and vetch, and are building it into a silo

PEACE IN WAR-TIME IN THE HEART OF BRITAIN: In some villages it is still possible to forget the immense cloud of War. In the lengthening shadows cast by the afternoon sun these youngsters, armed with nets and jars, set off for the village pond for the traditional sport of children everywhere of tiddler-fishing



MOVING DOWN THE HILLSIDE TO BE SHEARED: Thousands of mountain sheep which have been brought down from the fells seen at Kentmere Hall Farm, Westmorland. All local labour is recruited to deal with this gigantic task

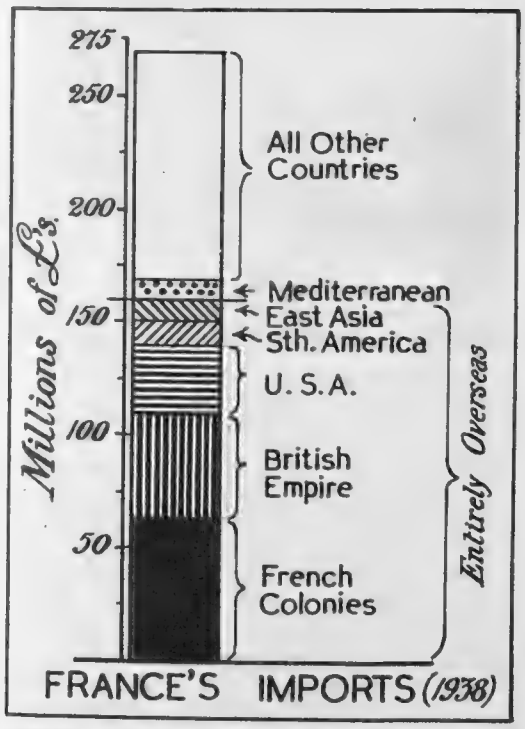
BLOCKADE & COUNTER-BLOCKADE

The Enemy's desperate attempt to blockade this country examined

A British convoy using one of the guarded traffic lanes

THE war blockade situation is now an involved affair. What with our long distance blockade overseas, our closer blockade in home waters, our mine-fields up and down the North Sea, and now stretching from Greenland in the west to the eastern shores of the Baltic, there is little chance of supplies getting through to Germany and Italy, or to enemy-occupied countries through their ports.

On the other hand, Hitler attempts his counter blockade by attacks by air and submarine on our convoys and other shipping, bombing of our shipping ports to disorganise trade and traffic, and the plundering of all essential war and industrial commodities in the occupied countries and the neutrals from whom we formerly obtained considerable supplies.



IMPORTS WHICH FRANCE WILL LOSE: In this diagram the lower portion shows the customary annual imports which were entirely sea-borne. The largest section was with the French colonies. The values are given in millions of pounds sterling

The result of these is that, while we still have a tight grip on supplies to the enemy, the Germans have certainly deprived us of certain important goods which we now have to get in reduced quantities from other, and more distant, sources.

When Denmark, Holland and Belgium were over-run by the Germans, the whole country in each case came under Nazi rule and occupation. Consequently these countries had to be treated by us as being entirely enemy-occupied ones, and subject to a similar blockade. But in the case of France, a distinction has been made by dividing the country into two roughly equal parts, "occupied" and "unoccupied," the latter being nominally under French Government and control.

This tragic submission by France to Nazi power and domination has now placed our late ally in a position which might almost literally be described as "between the devil and the deep blue sea"—Nazidom on the one side, and the oceans on the other. The resulting problem for France, and to some considerable degree for ourselves, is a doubly difficult and delicate one. One might well wonder if the military minds of Pétain and Weygand visualised such a contingency.

Whether the new French Government allows itself to be absorbed in the Axis scheme of a new Europe or not, the whole of France is now in the position of being as much cut off from the overseas world as are Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway. Like them, France is almost equally dependent on overseas sources for much of her domestic supplies, as she was for military ones.

No doubt, existing stocks of one kind or another, especially for domestic industries, have been saved from destruction but, after ten months of devastating war, they cannot be very large.

The position of her Colonial Empire from the political and military aspect is still obscure. Some still wish to retain their independence, while others are hesitating as to whether to obey their new Government or the dictates of conscience and devotion to their own cause. But there is an over-riding factor which affects them all seriously, the possibility of inter-communication with the Mother Country and each other. It all depends on who has command of the sea, and retains it.

With the large mass of French territory covering the greater part of West and West Central Africa, the Empire is scattered over the five continents and

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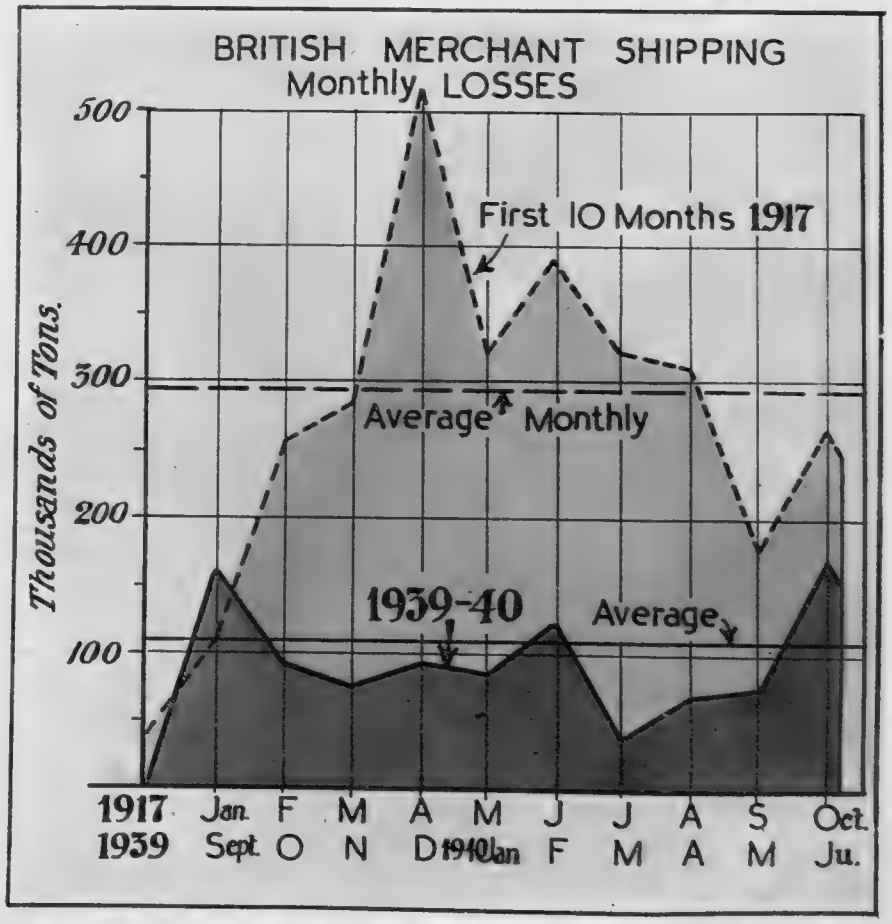
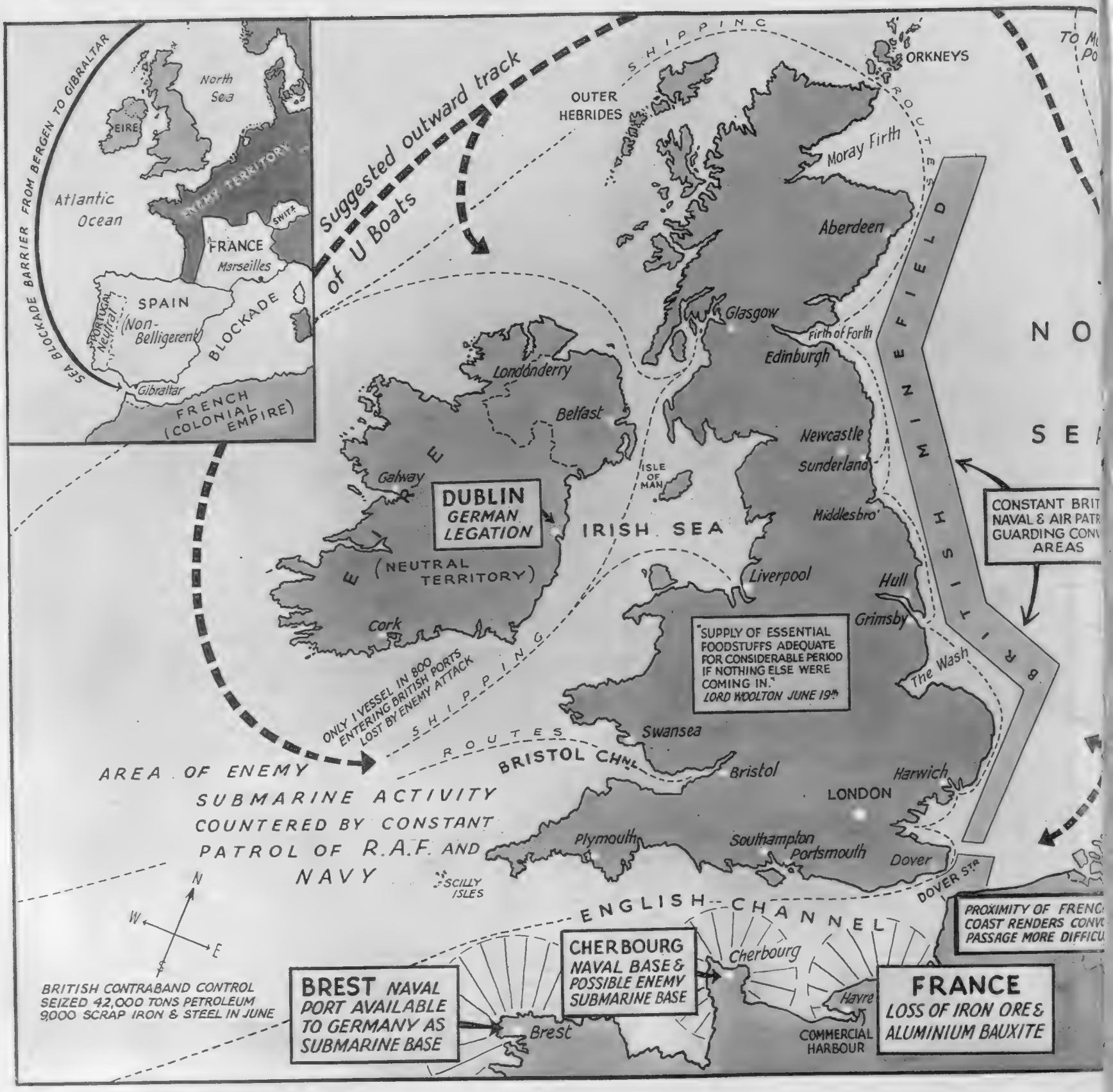
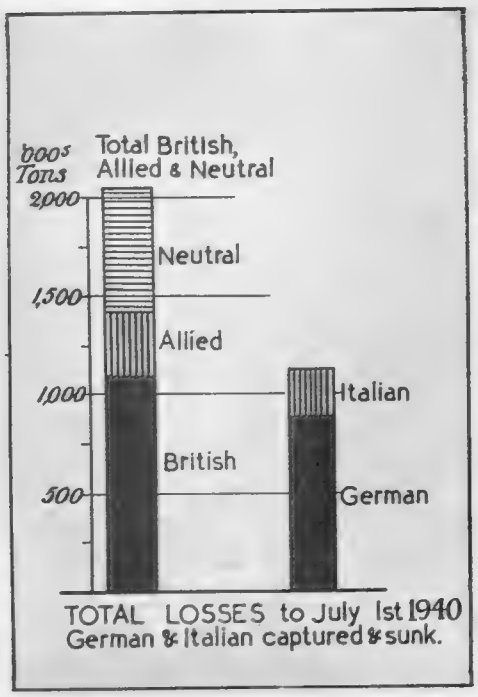


THE CURRENT SHIPPING LOSSES COMPARED WITH 1917: Although no figures are available for new construction, a rough estimate from the figures for the year 1917, combined with figures for the three years to 1938, would give an average weekly output of round about 20,000 tons. This figure, added to the tonnage captured, would show that, taking an average over a long period, the losses are just about made up by these two items





TOTAL BRITISH LOSSES TO JULY, AND TOTAL ENEMY LOSSES

The losses are shown in thousands of tons in the column on the left. Neutrality did not save many a good ship

The above chart has been prepared in order to illustrate as far as possible the blockade situation as it has been modified by the occupation by the enemy of Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Western and South-western France. The losses of certain products which came from these occupied territories is obvious, the most important being the loss of aluminium bauxite from France, and the harbours on the north and west coasts of France are equally obviously desirable to the enemy as naval bases for operation against this country's shipping lanes. On the other hand, the number of submarines in any one district does not necessarily increase their danger to adjacent shipping. Although German submarines can reach waters off the south-west of Ireland, they are countered by the constant patrol of the R.A.F. and the Navy, and in the North Sea, where the situation is not materially altered, the naval and air patrols are guarding the sea routes with increasing efficiency. In spite of all the enemy's air and sea efforts the losses to ships in convoy remain remarkably small.

Inset is a map showing the position of the British sea blockade which stops all vessels reaching enemy ports. The amount of blockade which will exist in the Western Mediterranean was not last week definitely settled.

THE DESTROYER SCREEN IS ALWAYS ACTIVE IN THE DANGER AREAS

The smoke screen is a very useful naval adjunct, and it looks as if it may become still more useful if the enemy tried to press home any advantages of increased proximity. But watchful eyes may well prevent many of these desiderata of the enemy

(Continued from preceding page)

seven seas. Indo-China half-way round the globe; Madagascar in the south-west Indian Ocean; Guiana, with the islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe in the West Indies; New Caledonia, the Society Islands, New Hebrides, Marquesas and other islands scattered over the west Pacific Ocean.

All of these are separated by thousands of miles of sea from France, and from each other. Even though the African Empire forms one continuous land area of some 4,000,000 sq. miles, it is only round the fringe of this enormous desert land that the productive districts

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ITALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

From the Actions on the Libyan Frontier

RESULTS OF THE BRITISH RAIDS INTO ITALIAN TERRITORY: British attacks were made immediately war was declared by Italy, although Italy had advertised heavy armed preparations for such an event. As soon as hostilities began, many officers and men from Italian Colonial posts were captured. Here are shown some of the officers and native Italian troops who have already been captured

A BIG ESCORT FOR A LITTLE MAN: An Italian officer is here seen crossing the compound of this British military station under escort. The contrast in national types is very marked. *Below*—Other Italian officers are receiving British money in order that they may make necessary purchases during their period of captivity

INTERROGATED AFTER CAPTURE: An Italian officer of high rank was among the captives made during one of the early raids into Italian Libya. He is here seen being interrogated by a British officer at the internment camp in Egypt

THE CIGARETTE IS THE INTERNATIONAL ACT OF COURTESY: Military actions continue on the Libyan frontier although they have, of necessity, been modified since the defection of France. All the prisoners shown in these pictures have been captured during recent operations

THE ROADS OF BRITAIN ARE WELL PREPARED AGAINST A MECHANISED ENEMY: This wide and well-constructed road might look very tempting to the small tanks, motor cyclists and lorry convoys; but—hidden over the rise is this strongly constructed barrier! Should the motorised units have penetrated as far as this, they will find here no flimsy barrier through which they can crash their vehicles; these obstacles are stoutly constructed of firmly cemented concrete, and dug deep into the ground are solid steel girders inches thick. And, of course, quick-firing units of all kinds will not be far distant, to create havoc when the inevitable halt comes!

IN THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND THERE ARE MANY STRONG POINTS SUCH AS THIS: As Mr. Churchill said in his inspiring broadcast speech last week-end, the past few weeks, since the fall of France, have not seen this country idle. In every county now our efforts are proceeding, so that when the ultimate moment comes Britain will indeed be an armed fortress — every road an obstacle, every village a fort, every city a citadel. It will be the work of only a few minutes to close these two barriers and defend them from adjacent points. Thousands of Local Defence Volunteers have assisted in the construction of strong points such as this

BARBED WIRE PLAYS A LARGE PART IN DEFENCE: As in the last war, barbed wire is being used in great quantities for defence purposes and for the protection of strong points. Barriers reinforced with this nasty material will not be too easy for infantry—or for that matter, mechanised troops—to penetrate

FOR THE DEFENCE OF BRIDGES—CONCRETE BASTIONS: Where bridges of strategic importance have to be guarded—and there are few bridges which are not of strategic importance nowadays—these tremendously strong concrete blocks should prove a definite obstacle to the invader's mechanised forces

TO STOP TANKS AND HEAVY VEHICLES FROM CROSSING BRIDGES: It needs but one ...re solid block to make this bridge impassable for heavy traffic. And then, of course, there no alternative road but the river! Incidentally, this scene should prove a familiar one to many motorists in the habit (in happier times) of driving to the coast

Above and below—TWO OBSTACLES TO THE FREE PASSAGE TO LONDON! These are only two out of many thousand obstacles which will confront the motorised invader if he should attempt the invasion of Britain. Obstacles like these will probably seriously hold up the rapid advances of the enemy such as took place through Belgium and France

HOW TO FOIL THE LANDING OF ENEMY AEROPLANES BY MAKING EVERY FIELD IMPRACTICABLE: For many weeks now, we have been advocating in "The Sphere" some such system as the above, to foil the landing of enemy planes on open spaces in Britain. The above picture shows how easy it is to render a large field innocuous: by irregular spacing of these huge concrete pipe-sections this once-potential landing ground is now rendered useless for such a purpose. An undercarriage or wing coming into contact with such heavy obstacles would collapse and cause the almost stalled aeroplane to crash for a certainty

The DEFENCE of BRITAIN

Some of the Visible Signs of Britain's Determination to Defend Every Foot of Her Soil

"Should the invader come to Britain there will be no placid lying down of the people, no submission before him as we have seen, alas, in other countries. We shall defend every village, every town and every city. The vast mass of London itself, fought street by street, could easily devour an entire hostile army."—Mr. Winston Churchill in his broadcast speech.

ANOTHER METHOD OF FOILING THE INVADER BY AIR: It is truly surprising how many derelict and unwanted motor cars there are throughout the countryside. Where they have been hidden all these years it would be hard to say; but the fields and open spaces of Britain are filled with them—all now doing their bit in aid of Britain's defensive schemes. Wherever a landing ground existed before, its value to the enemy has been nullified by such means as those depicted above

EVACUATED to the NEW WORLD

THE QUEEN'S NIECE AND NEPHEW IN THE UNITED STATES: Seen on their arrival in New York from Montreal where they disembarked after a secret journey across the Atlantic are ten-year-old Davina Bowes-Lyon and her brother Simon, aged eight; both are the children of the Queen's brother. With them are their three cousins, Anne, Joanne and Francis Nichols. They are said to be on their way to the Charlottesville estate of Mr. J. P. Morgan

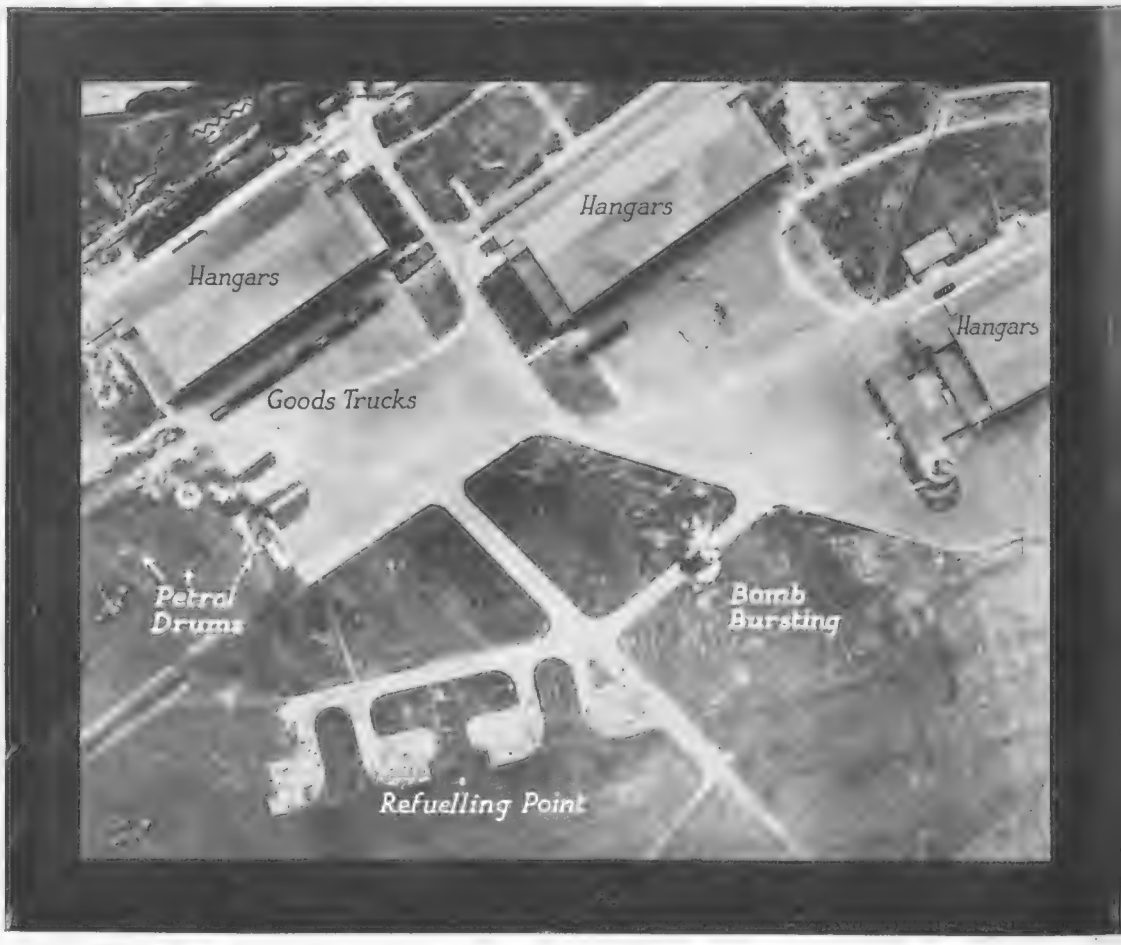
ARRIVING IN CANADA FOR THE DURATION: A group of young English society children—Angus and Jeremy James, Miss Venetia Fawcus, the Earl of March and the Hon. Gordon Lennox, sons of the Duke of Richmond; Lord Edward Cavendish and the Hon. George St. Lawrence Ponsonby, son of the Earl and Countess of Bessborough

FROM PROFESSOR TO PROFESSOR: Marion Brown, aged twelve, seen between her two brothers, Christopher, aged three, and Patrick, aged four. They are the children of a classics professor at Oxford and will be cared for by a professor at Toronto University

FRANCE STILL FIGHTS ON—BASTILLE DAY CELEBRATED IN LONDON: General de Gaulle, who is directing the French effort in London, inspecting the French Volunteer Legion last Sunday when they celebrated *le Quatorze Juillet* and the Fall of the Bastille. The General, with detachments of his forces, paraded in Whitehall and placed a wreath on the Cenotaph

THE PRINCESS ROYAL VISITS HER REGIMENT: The guard lined up for inspection by H.R.H. the Princess Royal at the depot of a Scottish regiment of which she is Colonel-in-Chief

The ROYAL AIR FO



A LOW-LEVEL ATTACK ON ESCHWEGE AERODROME: Situated three miles east of Kassel, this flying ground has recently been subjected to an intense bombardment from the air. This picture, taken from one of the R.A.F. bombers taking part, shows a bomb bursting on the road leading from the hangars to the refuelling point. Several German planes can be seen on the ground on the left of the picture

EAST INDIA PRESENTS A FLIGHT OF SPITFIRES: Captain H. H. Balfour (centre), Under-Secretary of State for Air, recently received, on behalf of the Government, a flight of Spitfires, the gift of the East India Fund to the Empire War Effort. Captain Balfour is seen at an R.A.F. station with the pilots who will fly the planes

WI[illegible] **MADE THE KING SMILE AND THE OFFICER FROWN:** It may have been the [illegible]y purposeful look on the face of the Irish Guardsman at bayonet practice!

[illegible]OVER GERMANY

SPEEDING ON THEIR MISSION OF DESTRUCTION: Another view of Eschwege Aerodrome on which are descending six high explosive bombs aimed, no doubt, at the bomber and two fighters seen in the bottom left hand of the picture. On the right are many incendiary bombs destined to destroy the hangar in the centre. Some incendiary bombs seem to have found their mark already on the side of the roof

The ETON v. HARROW MATCH

A BOUNDARY: E. Crutchley, of Harrow, scorer of a century in last year's match, hits a fast ball from J. A. Lyttleton. His score this year was 22

CLEAN BOWLED: D. C. H. McLean bowled by Gibbs to end the Harrow innings after adding 30 runs to the score, making a total of 185

HITTING THE MIDDLE STUMP: H. M. Chinnery, of Eton, turns to see the result of a fast ball by Henley

CRITICS' CORNER: Some of the Harrow boys who watched the first war-time cricket match between Eton and Harrow last Saturday. The result was a victory for Eton by one wicket. This event, always a high spot in public school cricket, was attended by nearly 3,000 spectators despite that it was held on a small local ground, and not as heretofore at Lord's

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM RETURNS TO ENGLAND: Great anxiety was felt for the distinguished novelist when Germany invaded France, as he was known to be in that country and no news of his whereabouts was available. Mr. Maugham is now in this country and recently broadcast his nightmare experiences; he left Cannes in a collier, tight-packed with hundreds of refugees and very scarce of food. After putting into Gibraltar the refugee boat reached England after three weeks with its passengers almost starving and in an exhausted condition

A BRITISH OFFICER'S WIFE BECOMES A QUEEN: Capt. E. T. W. Love is a Maori officer, at present serving with his battalion in England. He has just heard that his wife Takau has now been crowned Queen of Raratonga Island (in the Cook Islands group, some 1,600 miles from Auckland). She will thus be the head of all the native chiefs of the island

AMERICANS FORM AN "OUTPOST" IN LONDON: An outpost has been formed in Gordon Square as the London end of the William Allen White Committee to defend America by helping the Allies. Professor Arthur Newell, one of the leaders of the outpost, is here seen with his secretary, Mrs. Helen Perkins Gauntlett, going through the letters of support he has received from Americans in Great Britain

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

THE ESSAY—A LOST TECHNIQUE

A Fictionised Biography of Charles Lamb, the Master Essayist

THE art of the essay having lain in the doldrums for so long, it is not surprising that there should be a generation at large which knows little of and cares less for Charles Lamb; allowing itself to be unshaken by the fact that its elder brothers were Eliaphobes almost to a man, possibly because they were in revolt against their parents who were equally vigorous Eliaphiles.

Despite this modern indifference, so exquisite and frail a craft as that of the essay cannot languish as long as there is life in the written word; and whoever is tempted to fill its proud sails again can be no stranger to the works of Charles Lamb. The 'phobes have always attempted to demolish him as the father of whimsey; and none could play upon that mellifluous string with greater effect. They were also inclined to find his sense of humour arch and niggling, and to write him off as a man who intolerantly avoided the larger issues of the life of his times. The 'philes, on the other hand, could point to his exquisite craftsmanship, and take pleasure in the legend of Coleridge's gentle Charles, who never failed to charm everybody and everything he touched.

Neither of these schools is going to fall out with Mr. Neil Bell, who has used a thorough knowledge of his subject in a fictionised biography of Lamb, **SO PERISH THE ROSES** (Collins. 9s. 6d.). The author, in a vigorous note, declares that his subject was not "a sweet soul, 'gentle Elia,' justly dear and so forth; an emasculated, whimsical, ineffectual angel," but rather a "man who lived life so fully and so passionately that at fifty-seven he was burnt out, physically and mentally."

Yet the Eliaphiles need have no fear that Mr. Neil Bell is set upon pulling their idol from his pedestal. He does nothing of the sort, but rather from a legitimate interpretation of the Letters recreates the man as he was in all his strength and stature, with his physical and mental handicaps, his bibulous bouts, his love affairs and his occasional quarrels with his own intimate circle of friends. Whether the author accurately portrays Lamb's attitude to his ward, Emma Isola, is a point about which students will be able to argue; but for the rest of this full-length life story they must be agreed that the interweaving of fiction with fact seldom treads on controversial ground.

From this novel emerges a very live and human Charles, and something more definitely vigorous in character than the dumpy and pathetic Mary of the legend. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Crabbe, Robinson, Southey, Leigh Hunt, Scott, Moxon and the rest of that brilliant circle march through these pages in fine array, although the critical reader may not always agree with the author's asides upon them. It is, in fact, an ambitious novel on a difficult theme, and one upon which Mr. Neil Bell is to be congratulated.

Mr. Howard Spring has followed the phenomenal success of *Oh, Absalom!* with a long and ambitious social and political novel. It is in effect a success story; the history of the rise of a politician who was a poor boy in Manchester when Engels lived there and when Keir Hardie was leading a young and vigorous Labour movement.

FAME IS THE SPUR (Collins. 9s. 6d.) begins to take shape in that period when the bright and eager youth could listen to the Old Warrior's account of Peterloo, and come into possession of the sabre captured on that bloody field. With that sabre he could and would carve his way to fame, and to such fortune as attends ultimate translation to the House of Lords.

There was nothing that the Right Hon. Hamer Shawcross, M.P., could not do in the line of spell-binding oratory and that kind of quick opportunism which is the essential equipment of a successful politician. He was fortunate to be born in a period when the Labour Party needed men like him, and when men like him were able to adapt the class struggle to their immediate needs, to assume the mantle of official opposition, and indeed of Government, left by the fleeing remnants of the Liberal Party, and to consolidate the party's political triumphs to the correct personal degree.

Shawcross was a good deal of a phoney. He never was as poor a boy as the carefully built up legend would have it. His path from a Manchester back street to the House of Lords was not more difficult than the same route from the great country house, via Eton, to the same place. His boyhood friend Ryerson was a better type, but Ryerson indulged in principles which, in the easy path of politics, are sometimes called prickly; and while for Shawcross very little could go wrong, for Ryerson nothing much could go right.

Against the personal history of these two men, and of Shawcross in particular, Mr. Howard Spring fills in a very large background of social history covering the past fifty years. There is a good deal of detail concerning the early Labour and Trades Union movements, of the suffragette campaign and of the dramatic rise to power as a great party of the State of the Labour Party. Mr. Spring's attention to detail is as meticulous as his history is accurate. The character of the man Shawcross is in itself a completely objective study of a selfish, self-deceiving, vain, vainglorious and entirely successful man. The contrast between him and the other people in the movement is sharply defined, and the result is a fairly satisfying panorama dominated by this easily recognisable type.

If Mr. Spring has not succeeded in giving his social history the significance of, say, the Forsyte Saga, if his Shawcross fails to take on the absolute entity of a Soames Forsyte, it is because that touch of genius fails even to flicker through his pages. Nevertheless, it is a good solid, and indeed valuable, piece of work.

THIS SIDE OF GLORY by Gwen Bristow (Heinemann. 9s. 6d.) is a leisurely American family life novel of the period beginning in 1912, and set in the picturesque cotton plantations of Louisiana.

It is a novel of the old order-changeth-giving-place-to-new theme. The author makes it clear that even at this late date the tragedy of the Civil War still lay heavily upon the deep South. Everything in the life of its people was related to it, and to the sufferings which followed it; and the tradition of culture, authority and spacious living still persisted through succeeding generations who had the tenacity to cling to their old way of life. These families were proud, impecunious and intolerant; and they had learned through a decade or two to trade on their charm.

Kester Larne was a good specimen. He had all the breeding and good looks of his class, was light-hearted and gay, but he also had a full measure of its weaknesses. Eleanor Upjohn, on the other hand, was the hard-headed, practical and extremely sensible daughter of a self-made man—an engineer who, quite rightly, despised the Larnes and everything they stood for. These two fell in love, and married; and after a year or two of more or less blissful happiness the inevitable conflict broke out, and very nearly broke up their marriage.

Both of them, if they were to save anything from their family life, had to make adjustments. Eleanor could say "We are hard and brash and uncouth. We hurt your sensibilities. But we are American, more than you are, because we have got the qualities that made it possible for the American nation to be. We are the second pioneers." Nevertheless Eleanor finds herself having to compromise with this point of view; and in a somewhat artificial ending, in which an accident to one of the children brings them together, they find a solution and a way to go forward together, in what one supposes must be regarded as the true American fashion.

The life of a small village can always be safely relied upon to provide a rich vein for a practised novelist, and it is with some justice that Miss Richmal Crompton names her new novel **STEFFAN GREEN** (Macmillan. 7s. 6d.). To this pleasant hamlet came Lettice Helston, sick of an old passion, desiring nothing more than to forget. Lettice was nearing the dangerous forties, and had just divorced her husband. She was therefore glad in a way to be persuaded by an importuning, impulsive, and not unattractive young stranger to rent the cottage next to hers. Lydia gave the appearance of being very modern and hardboiled, but she had qualities of tenderness which Lettice was soon to discover when she found herself plunged into the life of the village.

She also finds that the hub of her new life is apt to be Mrs. Fanshawe, the vicar's wife, a woman with a fine sense of balance, of tact, of womanliness and gentleness. Then there are other types; the sinister Mrs. Webb, the garrulous and great-hearted Mrs. Skelton, the Ferring girls who lived up at the castle with their dragon of a grandmother, as well as the visiting woman novelist who descended on Steffan Green for local colour, and set about stirring it up whenever she could.

From this mixture there emerges plenty of action; at least two violent deaths, a kidnapping, some arson and plenty of abnormality. From so rich a mixture Miss Crompton extracts the maximum of action, and presents a group of characters which dovetail well into her story.

THE SPHERE TRAVEL BUREAU—*Continued from page iii of cover.*

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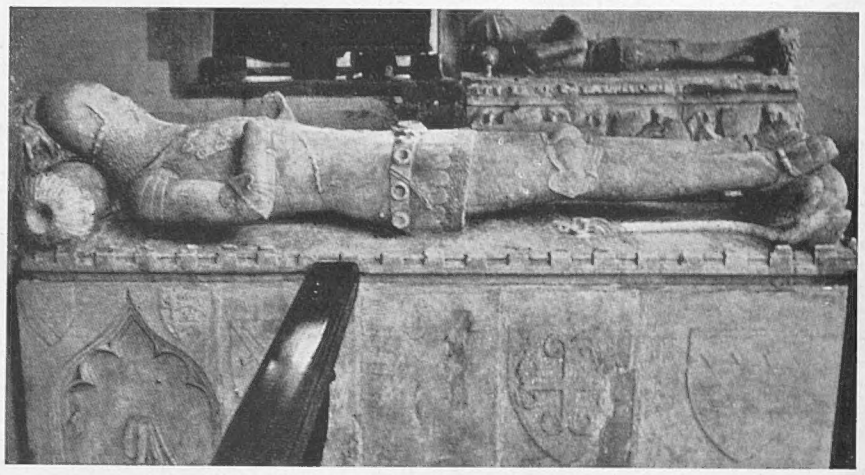
THE eighth Report of the Central Council for the Care of Churches, which is published by the Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly entitled *The Care of Churches: Their Upkeep and Protection*, is a remarkable war-time publication. It is excellently printed and illustrated.

It records a vast amount of work, extending through almost every diocese, on the care, rebuilding and preservation of churches, memorials and ornaments. The section devoted to the work of the Pilgrim Trust covers forty-eight churches, including the Cathedrals of Lincoln, Salisbury, Ely (the Lady Chapel), Ripon and Wells (the Library). It is mentioned that no less than 248 new churches (not counting temporary buildings) have been built or consecrated in England during the period 1929-1938.

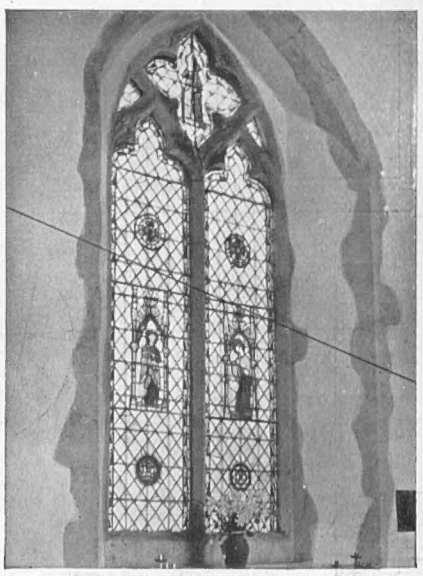
In the section dealing with the Pilgrim Trust, whose help in the maintenance of certain details of cathedrals and notable parish churches is gratefully recorded, there is reference to the repair of alabaster



AN ALABASTER EFFIGY TOMB at Swine in Yorkshire after cleaning and repair, a work sponsored by the Pilgrim Trust working with the advisory committees of the Church of England. The fragile alabaster, especially the panels, required delicate handling

tombs in the Hilton chapel of Swine Church, the glass in a fourteenth-century window in Willesborough Church, Kent, and to important work of the same nature carried out at Gipping, in Suffolk, not far from Stowmarket, where there is a beautiful chapel in the richest tradition of East Anglian Perpendicular work, built by Sir James Tyrell and Anne, his wife, at the end of the fifteenth century.

THE VIRGIN MARY in the window of the chapel in Gipping Church, Suffolk, the glass of which has been re-arranged in a manner suggesting the original plan. There is an equally good companion figure of St. John



A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WINDOW at Willesborough, Kent, which has now been cleared of obstruction. Its ancient glass is now worthily displayed

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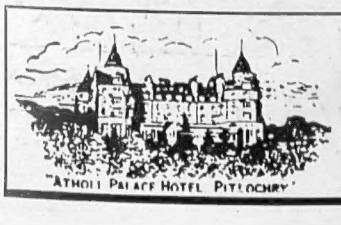

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

WHEN I hear someone extolling the beauties of the Devon coast, the Yorkshire moorlands, or the Welsh mountains, I feel inclined to say "What about the Home Counties?" Less is written about them than many another district, yet they have a peculiar charm of their own, only waiting to be discovered. Ask any film star who has had occasion to work at Denham, Pinewood, or Beaconsfield what they think of the surrounding countryside, and their replies will always be enthusiastic. One of the most popular haunts of the "kings and queens of celluloid" is the Saracen's Head, Beaconsfield. Half-timbered, and standing in the centre of this attractive old town, the wide gravel sweep in front of its windows is always full of cars, the dining-room and friendly bar equally full of people.

But there are a number of travellers who prefer the charms of a real old country pub to the larger and more dignified hotel, and these I would guide left-handed out of Beaconsfield town, through Burnham Beeches, a beauty spot in itself, past a little village called Egypt, and so to the Crown, East Burnham. I have often wondered whether the man who picked on this site for a little inn was first cousin to Lewis Carroll, with a flair for the mischievous, for though I have been there more times than I can remember, I never find it "first go off," in spite of the fact that a biggish road to Slough runs alongside it. Once found, your visit may well be a lengthy one; in summer roses clamber all over the garden, and you can have your tea among them; in winter a fire glows in the hearth of the little lounge bar, with its inviting array of bottles, and the dining-room that opens out of it positively invites you to stay for a meal.

It must not be forgotten that leafy Bucks spreads itself on either side of the main London-Oxford road, stretching northward almost to the Midlands at some points, and providing some very good "stopping-off" places on the way. Amersham, typical Buckinghamshire town, can offer you two. The Crown, with its Elizabethan mural decorations, can claim to be one of the last coaching inns in England; as recently as 1890, a horse-omnibus, direct successor of the old stage-coach, daily found its way from the Crown to the Bell at Holborn, and the inn still has its attractive cobbled yard running right back the whole length of the building. It has been said that a narrow shopping street is better for trade, because the loiterer on the left hand side can also see what is in the windows of the shop across the way. The King's Arms, Amersham, is at the street's widest point, but I doubt very much if that would prevent you from crossing the road to examine it more closely!

It looks so mellow, so friendly, so absolutely right in its slightly sleepy setting. The setting is the only sleepy thing about it, however: as I was enjoying my drink another man came in and asked for the whereabouts of a friend; the barman told him, and also gave him a running commentary on the morning's activities of half a dozen other of his acquaintances. Presently a girl came in and asked for a beef sandwich to take away. The order went though the hatch, "one round beef sandwich and plenty of greaseproof paper—it's for a lady." The deepset fireplace with its stone mantel and wide chimney was not a feature of this little lounge bar alone. There were others, equally attractive, in the tea-lounge and dining-room. A shallow staircase led to the only other floor, and modernly fitted bedrooms opened from a wide passage and pleasant landing, its windows giving on to one of those haphazard rambling gardens that are a feature of our English countryside.

Some people call Bicester a large village, others say it is a large town, but everyone will agree on two points; that it is surrounded by some of the finest hunting country that England can produce, and that in the King's Arms it has a first-class hotel. Mr. Ansell, who runs it, believes in simple comfort, as instanced by the well-upholstered chairs in the lounge, the cosy air of the bar, and the neat modernity of the bedrooms above. A folding panel in his big dining-room reveals still more space, available for dancing, but his own favourite exercise I should say is taken astride a horse, judging by the number of excellent sporting prints on the walls.

If you make your way through the main body of the hotel, you come to an attractively whitewashed yard, flanked on three sides by loose boxes. Beyond the yard again, you get another surprise, and a very pleasant one. A big walled-in garden contains a lawn, a lily pond, and two tennis courts in first-class condition, one hard and one grass. Another garden, almost as large, is well stocked with every kind of vegetable, and the glasshouses that bring on the tomatoes also help early chrysanthemums to "get a move on." Mr. Ansell believes in flowers all the year round, and sees that he gets them.

A Buckinghamshire town that is a town, and cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called a village, is Aylesbury, famous for its ducklings, and equally famous for its old English inn, the Bull's Head Hotel.

Facing the market place, but sufficiently well back from the road for the noise of the traffic to remain a rumble, the heavily-beamed lounge bar, sitting-room and entrance hall of the Bull's Head are as attractive as its half-timbered exterior. A twisting stairway, uneven with age, leads to an upper landing and a residents' lounge whose floor slopes uncertainly, its ceiling laced with more massive beams. The windows in many cases are small, yet the rooms contrive to be airy, and bedrooms and bathrooms offer you twentieth-century fittings, despite their medieval setting.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a 2½d. stamp for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *32–34, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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Good work—good whisky

JOHNNIE WALKER

Born 1820—still going strong

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